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HUMAN NEEDS
AND
THE JUSTIFICATION OF RELIGIOUS BELIEFS
An Essay in the Philosophy of Religion.

By
ALBAN G. WIDGERY, M. A.,
*Professor of Philosophy and of the Comparative
Study of Religions, Baroda.*

BARODA.

1918.

In even savage bosoms
There are longings, yearnings, strivings,
For the good they comprehend not.

Longfellow.

I will pray with the spirit, and
I will pray with the understanding also.
I will sing with the spirit, and
I will sing with the understanding also.

St. Paul.

There are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio,
Than are dreamt of in your philosophy.

Shakespeare.

PREFACE.

THE following Essay divided the Burney Prize at Cambridge in 1909. It was prepared and written during a busy time as a Lecturer at Bristol, and this, – like most University Prize Essays – soon after the graduation of the author. The much sought leisure in which to rewrite it entirely has failed to come, and the probability of it ever coming becomes more and more remote. It is, therefore, printed here substantially in its original form, although it has undergone considerable literary revision. The original conditions of the Burney Prize required the publication of the Essays, though that condition now applies only to the thesis of the Burney Student. The question may be justifiably asked why it should be published at all, and to this some answer should be given. The answer is the hope that that which cost the expenditure of a considerable amount of energy might be of some further usefulness. Part of this Essay appeared as a short article in volume IX of Dr. Hastings' *Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics*. In reviewing that volume a well-known Scotch thinker especially recommended the study of the article and singled it out for quotation, and this is the main reason for this publication. The Essay is now given in full and is in a form more accessible to the general reader. The writer has to thank Dr. Hastings and Messrs. T. & T. Clark for the permission to reprint the material of the article, which – in the *Encyclopedia* in a compressed form – here in the main constitutes Chapter IV. The first Chapter contains material of a more popular kind, but this is retained as of practical interest and incidentally throwing light on some different attitudes with which the problem is approached.

While the attitude I adopted towards the main question still appears to me essentially the correct one, the contention explicitly referred to in the original preface, that the Philosophy of Religion must be related intimately with an empirical and psychological study of religions, has continued to impress me more and more with its importance. For this reason I have made and continue to make a close

Preface.

study of the empirical contents of the different religions, and the different forms of religious experience. One result of these studies I expect to publish shortly under the title of "*The Comparative Study of Religions*". Had I pursued such studies more closely before writing this Essay, it would have been richer in its account of religious needs and religious beliefs, but I do not think that the lines followed or the points emphasised would have been very different.

I cannot close this preface without an expression of gratitude to the Master and Fellows of St. Catharine's College, not only for their continued encouragement during my undergraduate days, but particularly for their inducement to write this Essay by making me a grant towards the expenses of spending a Long Vacation in Cambridge in 1909 in preparation for it. Further, although he is in no way responsible for any statement in the Essay, I am indebted to my friend the Revd. J. Gordon Walker M. A., of Jesus College, who divided with me the Burney Prize, for a very valuable detailed analysis and criticism of the Essay as presented to the adjudicators.*

Baroda 1918.

ALBAN G. WIDGERY.

* Unless otherwise stated the books referred to in the following pages are published in London.

HUMAN NEEDS

AND

THE JUSTIFICATION OF RELIGIOUS BELIEFS.

CHAPTER I.

Introductory.

The mere possession of beliefs indicates some degree of intellectual comprehension, and only at a stage of rationality and reflection can man raise the question of the validity and justification of his beliefs. Even on the first consideration of the matter it seems almost self-evident on the one hand that beliefs are not the product merely of reason and yet on the other that reason or intellect has some part in their statement and justification. In many ways our age has frequently posed as one denying to any great extent the application of reason to questions of religious beliefs. Yet, without assuming the adequacy of reason in some degree to the discussion of this problem, no discussion is logically possible. To attempt to justify the disregard or the complete subordination of reason by intellectual arguments and rational discussion is, to say the least, paradoxical. Only by an initial faith in reason are we able to embark upon the following investigation. Nevertheless, it is significant at once of the incessant demands of reason and of the slowness of its progress, that at so great a distance from the beginning of human reflection, it should in this age be asking questions concerning its own capacity and with regard to some of life's chief problems: What is the nature of the evidence required to solve them?

The problem which is central in this essay has more than theoretical interest and importance. It has a practical bearing on the methods to be used in dealing with the prevailing religious situation, and the satisfaction of religious needs as felt at the present time. If on the one hand history and the life of men today in all lands show that man is "incurably religious"; on the other it is equally certain that everywhere amongst the more enlightened questions concerning the justification of religion become more and more poignant. That there is a tendency to neglect the traditional forms of religion cannot be denied. It becomes of moment, therefore, to ask whether this is due to a felt inadequacy in the nature of the doctrines themselves; in the ways in which they are expressed; in the methods adopted for their justification; or to some other reasons. In consideration of this question it is worth while noticing some statements recently made by diverse writers concerning the religious life in Britain. These are typical of what we might expect to find elsewhere also.

The most common complaint of the priest and of the ecclesiastic generally is well expressed by Canon Newbolt: "Religion fails because men and women are so wanting in seriousness; because they seem so little to appreciate the immense importance of life":¹. "The attitude of the laity to the churches today," said Mr. Peile in his Bampton Lectures, "is determined by the unsatisfactory lives of professing Christians"². Another and more reaching answer of the same type is that of Dr. Fairbairn: "The working classes are alienated because the church has lost adaptation to the environment in which it lives"³. While one writer contends that: "the English artisan is more estranged from the religious life than

1. "*Religion*". 1899 p. 53.

2. "*The Reproach of the Gospel*" 1907.

3. "*Religion in History and Modern Life*."

ever" ⁴, Sir. O. Lodge maintains that it is not religion to which people are indifferent but the forms in which it is expressed. According to Mr. Garrod, the reason is not simply that of expression; it is also a matter of principle – for, the moral teachings of the New Testament are regarded as a source of disapproval and discontent ⁵. The ideal set forth so long ago is sometimes rejected as impractical because of the great divergence between it and what has been achieved. "The sublime theory of the Gospel and the actual effect it has had on human society seem to be strongly incongruous; and perhaps the extent of the incongruity and the far-reaching accusation that it suggests have never been so fully perceived and so bitterly chafed against as in our own time, when historical science has stripped off from the past all its reverend disguises and a hundred circumstances have quickened our impatience of non-moral religiousness. Browning puts into the aged Pope's soliloquy a question which it is hard for the modern Christian to answer, and impossible for him to avoid :

And is this all that was to be ?
Where is the gloriously decisive change,
Metamorphosis, the immeasurable,
Of human clay to divine gold, we looked
Should, in some poor sort, justify its price ?
Had an adept to the mere Rosy Cross
Spent his life to consummate the Great Work,
Would not we start to see the stuff it touched
Yield not a grain more than the vulgar got
By the old smelting process of years ago ?
If this were sad to see in just the sage
Who should profess so much perform no more,
What is it when unsuspected in that Power,
Who undertook to make and made the world,

4. Dr. F. Granger. " *The Soul of a Christian* " 1900, p. 56.

5. In " *The Religion of all Good Men.*" 1906.

Devised and did effect man, body and soul,
 Ordained salvation for them both, and yet.....
 Well, is the thing we see, salvation ?⁶

Dr. Figgis in "*The Gospel and Human Needs*" assumes that the ordinary presentation of Christian doctrines does and will satisfy the masses. As a matter of fact the ordinary man does not seem to be much affected by the traditional conceptions ; and it may often be said even of those who are earnest in religious practice that they pay little attention to some of these doctrines, which though they may cause them no felt difficulty, give them little help. Still we may agree with Dr. Figgis that what we are practically concerned with is not so much the validity of religion in general as of one view of religion as contrasted with others. From even these quotations it will be evident that there are many influences leading to the acceptance or the rejection of certain doctrines as beliefs, and to participation in religious practices. The part which reflection or reason ought to play in religion is sometimes exaggerated as by rationalistic opponents of tradition, and sometimes, and this frequently in the present time it is under-estimated by those who seek in religion chiefly an outlet for their emotions.

"What it distrusts" says Professor Henry Jones, speaking of this age, is not religion, but theology, and yet "while this age is more fully committed to intellectual enquiry, and on the whole more successfully engaged therein than any of its predecessors, it is at the same time prone to doubt, and even to deny, that intellectual enquiry can have any real value in precisely those matters which are best worth knowing"⁷. The remedy, the only remedy we venture to suggest lies not in the abandonment of reason but in a better understanding of what is implied in its use. The masses will become more and more educated and a presentation and justification of religious beliefs suitable to

6. Dr. Hensley Henson. "*Moral Discipline in the Christian Church* 1905.

7. *Hibbert Journal*. vol i. 289, 229.

their needs will become more and more urgent. "As modern life becomes ever more complex, so does the need for guidance grow ever more urgent" ⁸. The wide practical social and religious interests of the late Canon Barnett are well known, and his testimony to the way of education - involving as it does the use of thought in all spheres of life - is well worth quoting "I am prepared to say that the most pressing need is for higher education.....there is no activity which more surely advances religion than the teaching which gives insight, far sight, wide sight" ⁹.

The practical implication which we hope to make evident in the following discussion, technical and merely theoretical as it may seem, is in harmony with this last writer's contention; the power of ideas, conceptions, beliefs. It is this which makes the question of the basis of the validity of beliefs so important: it is this which makes education the most important factor in dealing with the religious situation of the age. Along with this is the requirement of a restatement and re-interpretation of religious doctrines, a requirement admitted on nearly all sides¹⁰. "The great weakness of our church," says Canon Wilson, "is the poverty of its popular theology. The great need of the church is a wise and understanding clergy to interpret into the vernacular the strong and masculine faith that is now possible" ¹¹.

Even the least acute of observers will acknowledge that the average individual is not led to belief by elaborate discussion and logical demonstration. A distinction of great significance for practical purposes, must be made between the causes of beliefs and the grounds of their justification, or the means adopted to establish their validity. Once convinced of the value of the beliefs the religious teacher will use various methods to induce others to accept

8. Dr. Hensley Henson. *op. cit.*

9. *Hibbert Journal* vol. v, p 892.

10. See s. g. Introduction to the *Cambridge Theological Essays*.

11. "The Gospel of the Atonement, 1899 Lecture. II.

them. He will appeal to their emotions by the form of his discourses, by the congregational singing of hymns, and by other religious practices. Many persons accept beliefs because of the influence upon them of others who earnestly believe them. The question of the validity of beliefs is different and while it concerns all to the degree in which they understand it, it is chiefly a problem for those who presume to be religious teachers, and for theologians and philosophers. In contending therefore for careful technical consideration of the validity of beliefs we have no intention of proposing that intellectual discussion is the only way or is the chief way for the religious teacher to "cause" belief.

At least as far as the form of expression goes beliefs are largely relative to the intellectual level of the believer. The generality of mankind cannot grasp clearly the doctrinal propositions as stated by a trained theologian or philosopher when he formulates in the most accurate way the articles of his religious creed. Forms of expression of beliefs have to be adapted to the requirements of those with whom we are dealing, and so far as they serve their purpose they are justified, even though they may not be strictly valid, judged objectively. As Dr. Inge puts it : "Formulas and ceremonies cannot be devised to satisfy the profoundest thinker in the community ; they must be intelligible to the average intellect and conscience; at best they can only be a very popular presentation of what the wisest man believes" ¹². Accommodation is essential and a justifiable view of accommodation possible. All should agree with the view that as far as expression goes it is justifiable to adapt religious teachings to the needs of the taught : but our problem goes deeper than this, even though this question of the form of expression in relation to the level of the believer is present at every stage of human development. From the practical point of view the form of presentation to the masses should be

12. " *Truth and Falsehood in Religion.* " 1906. p., 42.

as near as possible to that form judged most valid in the light of the latest development of knowledge. This involves a duty of re-statement in popular form which is a duty religious bodies more often neglect than perform. There should be a transition and advance by a gradual process to the next higher stage. Yet only when one is confident that the different form of expression will be intelligible to the people concerned is it justifiable to try to lead them to it.

The question might therefore be raised as to whether certain forms of expression of particular doctrines are justified on the ground of satisfying the needs of persons at less cultured levels. This is not the task to be embarked upon here. The theologian and the philosopher are concerned with the most satisfactory expression. But it is evident that this also may change with the advance of thought, moral discrimination, and religious feeling. The less perfect expressions are justified in so far as they are identical with the more perfect. It is scarcely necessary here to discuss the suggestion that a religious attitude is possible without the adherence implicitly or explicitly to any doctrines. The important question concerns the nature of particular doctrines actually believed and how they are to be justified. In this connection it is important to notice some of the attitudes which are evident in modern philosophical thought.

In modern philosophy there are two tendencies which though complimentary one to the other are respectively emphasised by different thinkers. Both are equally important though they are not both recognised together to the extent rightly demanded. For our investigation they are of the utmost significance. The first, and this requires the greater emphasis, is the insistence that the various problems are to be analysed into their individual factors and that the solutions must have this individual or particularised character. To take our own particular

problem as example: if we talk of needs and beliefs, we mean that each need is a particular need and each belief a particular belief. When this aspect of the matter is fully appreciated it will be evident that the form of the problem is also particularised: Does *this* belief satisfy *this* need? and Is it justified on that account? Nowhere is it more important to recognise the reality of the particular than it is with relation to values. It might be said with some justification that all values as experienced are particular. Religion is concerned predominantly with values, and on this depends the fundamental importance of this individualising tendency for the consideration of the problems of religion. The bane of so much theological and philosophical discussion in the past has been the failure to treat problems in their individuality. Although here we are concerned chiefly with the main question of the validity of a certain type of argument, the discussion in chapter IV will give some examples of treatment of particular needs and beliefs.

The other definite demand made in modern philosophy is for the consideration of wholes as wholes. This is similar to what Dr. Merz¹³ has called "the synoptic aspect", the *toute ensemble*. To take our problem again as example: we are to think of needs in their entirety in relation to the whole of human nature, and of beliefs in their completeness in a creed. A creed as a whole of related beliefs should stand for the representation, at least of the principles, of a definite type of life. In some quarters there has been an attempt to reject this demand for a consideration of wholes in any ultimate sense. This is to strike at the root of human knowledge, since every science is in part concerned with wholes. To comprehend a whole and its meaning is, as it were, to grasp the parts and their relations in one intuition, or at least in a

¹³ History of European Thought in the 19th. Century. Vols. III and IV. and Proceedings of the Durham Philosophical Society.

definite unbroken continuity of thought. Surely it may be maintained that there is some kind of knowledge of a whole in the immediate acquaintance with the continuous life of the self. If the unity of consciousness is fully admitted, there should be no difficulty in acknowledging a real meaning in the conception of wholes and in the experience of the "synoptic aspect".

An examination of the validity of the use of the argument that beliefs are justified by their satisfaction of human needs virtually involves the whole problem of the theory of religious knowledge. But there cannot be one theory of knowledge for theology and another for philosophy. To be adequately treated therefore our particular problem should raise a discussion of the whole subject of epistemology. If any correct distinction can be made between epistemology generally and the theory of religious knowledge it is that the latter is limited in its data. Again, the validity of any beliefs depends ultimately upon the nature of Reality ; and the nature of Reality is the quest of philosophy. Epistemological questions cannot be decided apart from ontological ones. The character of knowledge and the character of being are essentially related. Thus, if our knowledge is in any way true of Reality, it must in some way be akin to it. To us it appears that it is only if Reality is essentially spiritual that knowledge as a factor in the spiritual consciousness of man is at all possible. It is beyond the limits of this essay to state and defend a spiritualistic view of Reality ; nevertheless, it ought in consistency with the above contention as to the intimate relation of epistemology and ontology, to be borne in mind that such a spiritualistic conception implicitly underlies the discussion.

The fact of the intimate connection of epistemology and ontology is one ground for our later insistence on the requirement of an empirical examination of human needs as such. • Modern philosophy, and especially British

philosophy in accord with its past spirit, recognises the inevitability of considering the empirical. Philosophy has to take account of the sciences and amongst these the empirical sciences of religion; and not merely the systematic sciences but also history, including the history of religions. The religious experience is an important and vital element in the *totum* of experience which philosophy seeks to explicate. Man can and must be studied from a variety of standpoints and the results of these studies must be brought together. To bring them together, to obtain a balanced view, a view doing justice to man as a highly complex being, is one of the aims of philosophy. Some aspects of the empirical nature of religion are discussed in a later chapter as illustrating the manner in which such empirical study affects the solution of our general problem.

CHAPTER II

HISTORICO-CRITICAL SURVEY: KANT TO SABATIER

There cannot be much doubt that philosophy originated to a very large extent in the desire for and the effort to find grounds for satisfying answers to questions raised through the presence of religious needs. The history of thought shows, however, that this general problem has not always been raised in the same way. The form of the problem and the form of the solution proposed are always closely related to the general culture of the age in which they arise. Yet, as it has been fundamentally the same problem that has continually arisen in the past, so the answers have always presented the same broad divisions which they do now. An exhaustive account of the attitudes of philosophers and philosophies to the question how far the satisfaction of needs is a justification of religious beliefs, independently of or even in opposition to reason, would necessitate a consideration of much of the ancient thought of the East and of the West. Such a treatment is impossible here. Incidentally it may be noticed that amongst the Christian Scholastics a distrust of reason for the establishment of some religious beliefs was frequent, notably so with Duns Scotus and his followers. The theory of "double truths" propounded later by William of Occam, according to which truths of religion might be false in philosophy, suggests similar distinctions made by some quite recent Western thinkers. The present survey will begin with Kant from whom the positions of many, especially of the theological writers to whom reference must be made, are ultimately derived.

Kant's attitude towards the establishment of the fundamental beliefs of religion depends upon his view of a dualism in reason, giving us on the one hand the "theoretic or pure" reason and on the other the "practical" reason. By means of the theoretic reason we can know nothing but what we can perceive in space and time, or develop through certain forms of our understanding in relation to things as they appear to us. With this limitation of knowledge Kant's attitude to religious beliefs is that of theoretic Agnosticism. Nevertheless, it is important to remember that though theoretic reason is of no value in giving positive grounds for these beliefs it is useful in the criticism of views antagonistic to religion. For Kant was convinced of the importance of religious beliefs: he says, "It is unquestionably necessary to be convinced of God's existence; though it is not so necessary to demonstrate it."

The Kantian conception of the theoretic reason implies the relativity of knowledge. But the statement of mere relativity involves a contradiction, and it cannot be accepted as a point of view from which all knowledge is to be regarded. To carry any implication valid of all knowledge the statement of the relativity of knowledge must itself be absolute. If the statement is itself relative, we are in endless relativity and the implication of the statement may itself be doubted. In asserting that knowledge is limited to phenomena, either phenomena is all there is—then the phenomenal is absolute; or it is known that mere phenomena is not all there is, then mere phenomena have been transcended, and knowledge is not merely relative. It does not seem possible to hold consistently the view of a thorough-going relativity: that there is something absolute in knowledge must be admitted.

The beliefs in God, immortality, and freedom, which Kant, with 18th Century Rationalism generally, conceived as essential for religion, though unsupported on grounds of theoretic reason are called by him necessities of the practical reason which affirms them by an act of moral faith. "Conscience affirms God, the intellect is powerless to deny him."

Beliefs are justified by their satisfying certain moral needs or needs arising from the implications of the moral life. The postulate of the existence of God is made by Kant in order to satisfy the felt need for the ultimate co-incidence of happiness and virtue. Whether in this he was consistent with his rigid ethical theory of duty for duty's sake it is not necessary for us to decide. But two other matters must be noticed. The inquiry of Hume as to why we should hold that there is another 'state' where justice and happiness are harmonised, when there is so much inequality here is not answered by Kant. It also seems a fair criticism to say that he tends to represent religion as an appendage of morality rather than as its goal and completion. The God whose existence according to him is not supported by speculative reason is, it should be noted, the 'external' God of the Deist, but hardly the God of the Theist or of the later Idealism. The argument based on the practical reason is not stated as a general method applicable to justify all beliefs which satisfy religious or moral needs. It is simply used for the three ideas mentioned, which are denominated 'regulative' ideas. For this limitation there is little justification in Kant's published works.

Since Kant it has been the effort of most Idealist thinkers to give a consistent account of the unity of consciousness which shall do justice to the dualities of experience. The general criticism of Kant, that there is no dualism in reason of the nature he expounds seems valid. Experience and a consideration of Kant's use of his own theory show that such a dualism is not present. The reason he uses to pass from his ethical experience to the postulates of God, immortality and freedom, is theoretical as much as in any other passage of his thought, in so far as with certain assumptions and certain stated facts, inference is made to a conclusion. A mere act of the moral will cannot as such apart from theoretical consideration postulate a metaphysical entity, God, or the metaphysical reality of immortality or of freedom. These are concepts in the mind implying an objectivity which

is not affirmed by a feeling or act of moral will. "What is often forgotten" says Mr. Bradley, "is that certainty belongs to feeling only as that is actually felt." The possibility of assumption and error arises as soon as there is a passage from the experience as such to intellectual statements in regard to it. As consciousness is a unity containing differentiations, reason is one aspect or function which reflects upon the differentiations, e. g. upon what are called the 'material' and what are called the 'ethical' aspects of experience. The distinction between the 'theoretical' and the 'practical' reason is little other than that of the aspects of experience considered. If the *concepts* God, immortality, and freedom are used they must be recognised as arrived at—in the only way possible for them to be arrived at—by thought and reflection on the part of someone. The valuable element of Kant's work here is his emphasis on the reality of the ethical aspects of experience, and in his effort to give an independent examination of the problem of value as distinct from the problem of knowledge. The attention now given to the value judgment is a tendency ultimately derived for modern philosophy, from Kant: his view of human beings as possessing 'intrinsic dignity or worth,' as being 'ends in themselves' strengthened his influence in this direction.

Kant had insisted on the activity of the moral will; Schleiermacher is the classical post-Kantian example of a writer regarding religion almost entirely as feeling. The essence of religion, in his view, is the feeling of dependence, and the justification of religious beliefs rests ultimately on the satisfaction of feeling rather than on the theoretic reason. He seems to neglect the fact that beliefs are held to involve objective implication and truth. Ideas and beliefs are not of much moment: "Religious ideas are reflections on religious feeling."¹ Religion itself is life in the Infinite Spirit. "Religion by its own nature," says Schleiermacher himself, "is as far removed from all that is systematic, as philosophy is

1. Mind. October 1909.

2. Dr. Oman in "*Schleiermacher, on Religion*," London 1893 p. 43.

disposed to it.”³ God is known by immediate intuition, and thus belief in him is justified. Schleiermacher’s view is essentially one of mystical emotion, though in his later writings he tended to give greater recognition to thought and action. Further, as Professor Ladd points out “Schleiermacher not only neglects the intellectual and rational factors but also some of the emotional elements of religion. In spite of his inadequate recognition of the place of thought his conception of a “Weltgeist” (a Universal Spirit) is an elaborate product of the reason. The chief defect in his position is its inadequacy in reference to the complexity of the religious consciousness and man’s intellectual needs. The influence of Schleiermacher on later religious and theological writers it would be difficult to overestimate. The influence, both in regard to emphasis on feeling, and in his view of religious ideas being products of religious experience constitutes the importance of his mention in this survey.”⁵

Though contemporary in time with Schleiermacher, Hegel was a little later in the history of thought. As previously suggested the effort of most Post-Kantian European philosophers has been to give an account of experience which would avoid the Kantian dualism and bring the world of ideals and the world of phenomena into the relationship of a consistent whole in thought. Kant himself had pointed out the way—the way of Idealism. Schleiermacher had insisted on the unity of consciousness in feeling. But it was Hegel who was the first great constructive Idealist in modern philosophy. Working out the boldest and most embracing system he conceived of God as the perfect rational synthesis of which every consciousness is the potential form. According to Hegel, reason is immanent in the structure of Reality, and in and through reason we have real though incomplete knowledge, of God. Thought is constructive and divine. Beliefs, therefore,

3. *Ibid* p. 17.

4. “ *The Philosophy of Religion*,” Vol. I. p. 269

5. For an estimation of Schleiermacher see A. J. C. Allen “ *The Continuity of Christian Thought* ” and Pfeiderer O, “ *Philosophy of Religion*,” Eng, trs, 1886, Vol 1. pp. 302—340.

are not justified simply in satisfying needs, but in being rational. "It is the fact that man is a rational thinking spirit" says Dr. Ladd, "which creates for him the possibility of religion and makes him capable of religious value-judgments, or of judgments of any kind. Only such a being is capable of rising to the idea of God, or of so much as conceiving of eternity, immortality and duty. It is man's rationality, therefore, which is the root fact of his capacity for religion. Hegel was undoubtedly right in this at least."⁶ The importance of Hegel for us is that the strength of present day Idealism, however much that may differ from his position, is mainly due to his influence. Though he does show evidence of appreciation of other factors of consciousness besides thought his emphasis on thought and reason led to opposition.

Feuerbach, for example, contended that the religious life centred around the needs of the heart. For him, God, as the object of religion is essentially the outcome of feeling, not of the intellect, "of the heart's necessity not of the mind's freedom; in short, an object which is the reflex not of the theoretical but of the practical tendency in man." Most of the writers we have to consider later show a lamentable neglect of an adequate consideration of Idealism; yet it is in some form of Idealism, or Spiritualism, if at all, that ground is to be found for a satisfactory view of the relationship between needs and the justification of beliefs.

The philosophical position of Hermann Lotze, who in my opinion has had the greatest effect on philosophy, and through Ritschl also on theology since Hegel, is from one point of view to be regarded as a critical and constructive reaction from Hegel's extreme Rationalism. For Lotze Reality is richer than thought, a complex and concrete. Thought may interpret Reality. He does not give to thought the place that Hegel does because his view of thought differs from that of Hegel, being more purely formal. In the main his aim is to formulate a philosophy which will do justice to

all aspects of personality, in its complexity. Reason is an aspect of personality, and is involved in the acquiring of truth ; and thus while thought does not predominate in his system he nowhere regards it as unimportant and nowhere lays himself open to a fair charge of anti-intellectualism. Thought can be valid of things, though it does not correspond to them in the sense of copying. This validity is due chiefly to the fact that thought depends for its activity upon an external stimulus. Lotze appears to have believed that ultimately faith in a Personal World-Ground justifies the acceptance of the validity of thought, but this would have to rest upon the value judgment that the World-Ground is good. Descartes raised the difficulty that the external stimulus—the Other—may be deceiving us ; but nowhere does Lotze discuss the difficulty. Thus, though thought is recognised the trust in it is based ultimately upon a value-judgment. Lotze himself almost explicitly avows this when he says that “ In the immediate assurance which we feel of the worth of the world and of the world-order, lies the security of our knowledge.”

While the intellect can support Theistic belief, the *content* of the idea of God so far as it appeals to the religious nature of man can only be obtained with the aid of value-judgments. Judgments of value for Lotze are chiefly the deliverances of the moral consciousness. It is from these judgments, relating as they do, to moral needs, that he seeks justification for a satisfactory view of life. It is primarily in the ethical rather than in the merely rational that satisfaction is to be obtained. “ I admit” says Lotze, “ that the expression is not exact, but still I feel certain of being on the right track when I seek in that which *should be* the ground of that which *is*” ⁷ The ethical motive, in fact, underlies all his speculative effort ; and he turns to the ‘ practical’ reason to confirm his speculations. But the fundamental question is : How far does the metaphysical construction of the universe correspond with the ethical one ?

7. *Metaphysic Eng. Trs.* 1887, vol. ii, p. 319.

Lotze's profession of faith is that Reality is fundamentally teleological and ethical. Though his general attitude can rightly be regarded as an argument from needs to their satisfaction, and though he tended to make feeling predominate, he recognises to the full the necessity of the speculative examination of religious beliefs, and his has been one of the most successful attempts to justify religious beliefs in relation to the complex nature of personality. Though the increased attention to the value-judgment may be traced back to Kant, it seems true that the Lotzian criticism of Hegel and of the Naturalism of the middle of the 19th century was its immediate starting-point. Lotze's attitude towards philosophical effort differs much from that of many later writers, often anti-intellectualist, who have professed to follow him.

The influence of Albrecht Ritschl upon theology has been and still is great. It may sound strange to students of his works, but it is nevertheless correct to say that he never seriously considered the epistemological problem, the difficulty of which he practically ignores. He states his dissent from Kant⁸ and his acceptance of a Lotzian epistemology. Sometimes we do find suggestion of a knowledge of a 'thing' or 'being for self' as in Lotze. But Ritschl's exposition is not consistent, and both he and most of his followers are much nearer the Kantian Agnosticism than to Lotze. Marked evidences of the Kantian dualism, and of the primacy of the 'practical' reason are found. The theoretical activities of the mind cannot attain a real knowledge of God. Man is able to deal intellectually only with matters of phenomenal experience and hence Ritschl is led to abjure metaphysics. Theoretical judgments have no place in the sphere of religion; religious beliefs cannot be justified by metaphysics if only because there is nothing

8. Ritschl, *Justification and Reconciliation*. Eng. Trs. d. 19
Criticism of Ritschl's Kantianism is not necessary here.

9. Dr. A. E. Garvie appears to hold that R. is nearer Lotze: see
Hibbert Journal, Vol III, 833 ff.

religious in investigations of the kind. Nevertheless neither Ritschl nor his followers succeed in freeing themselves from metaphysical construction. The standard of valuation on which they rely has been elaborated by thought out of experience and is not given immediately in experience. In this and in other ways they are as a school inconsistent with their statements of the relationship between metaphysics and theology. Certain conceptions of a metaphysical and ethical nature are involved in their positive statements, but little is done to justify them: as e. g. God, with the character of Father; the immortality and the infinite worth of the individual soul.

The opposition of Ritschlianism to mysticism and its rejection of the intellectual as a source of religious knowledge are the natural correlates of the emphasis on the moral will with which, according to Ritschl, again following Kant, we come into touch with Reality. "To accept the idea of God in this way is, as Kant observes, practical faith and not theoretical cognition."¹⁰ In other places he says "God and the world for religious thought are objects of the intuitive imagination"¹¹ and "that in religion the thought of God is given." Throughout, the purposive aspects of experience are recognised. The complex nature of religion in involving the whole nature of consciousness is admitted, though it is contended that feeling is the basal function of the mind, in as much as in it "the Ego is originally present to itself."

Religion gives a "solution of the condition in which man finds himself both as a part of the world of nature and a spiritual personality claiming dominion over nature."¹² The knowledge of God can be demonstrated as religious only when it is conceived as securing to the believer such a position in the world as more than balances its restrictions; and apart from this value-judgment of faith there exists no knowledge of God worthy of this content. It is the duty of theology he contends "to

10. Ritschl, *ibid* p. 225.

11. p. 207.

12. Ritschl, p. 199.

conserve the special characteristic of the conception of God, namely, that it can only be represented in value-judgments." The whole weight of justification of religious beliefs is thus thrown upon value-judgments and revelation. This emphasis upon the value-judgment is common to all the Ritschlians. One difference between theoretical and value-judgments is that the former are concerned with causes, the latter with purposes; the former relate each 'object' to its conditions in the world-whole, the latter relate it to the ends which man sets before himself.¹³ A distinction between concomitant and independent judgments of worth is also made by Ritschl. The former are the aspects of feeling which accompany judgments even of a scientific kind. Independent judgments of worth are moral and religious, though, "the peculiar nature of religious value-judgments is less clear in the case of religions of an explicitly ethical character." Every cognition of a religious kind is a direct judgment of value. "Religious knowledge moves in independent value-judgments which relate to man's attitude to the world, and call forth feelings of pleasure or pain in which man enjoys the dominion over the world vouchsafed to him by God, or feels grievously the lack of God's help to that end".¹⁴

The chief modern efforts to justify beliefs by their satisfaction of needs have assumed this form of justification through value-judgments. Value depends very largely upon needs: what satisfies needs is in so far as it satisfies them, valuable. The question is whether value-judgments can be validly used for the establishment of beliefs apart from metaphysical enquiry. Beliefs cannot be justified merely by immediate experience apart from thought: immediate experience is simply immediate experience, and apart from the interpretation of thought that is all that can be said about it. The beliefs with which we are concerned are, on the contrary, of the nature of ultimate conceptual interpretations.

13. Dr. Garvie, "*The Ritschlian Theology*", p, 175.

14. Ritschl.

Value cannot be known and value judgments cannot be made unless some value has been or is being actually experienced. Some relation to immediate experience, some objective reference, must be admitted in all value judgments. Though the subjective is present in the appreciation of value, so is the objective. The Ritschlians protest against a separation of value-judgments and existential implications. They mean to imply the existence of the "object" or "relationship" involved in the value judgment just as in theoretical judgments. But this is to go too far and is to omit the consideration of an important distinction. This distinction is that between a value-judgment upon a conceptual construction and a value-judgment upon an actual experience or an actual object within our knowledge. As a concept is a product of thought reflecting on experience, so value-judgments upon concepts arise from previous actual experience of value. Every concept has some basis in experience, but every concept does not necessarily imply the existence of a reality in accordance with it. Thought abstracts aspects from the objects of actual experience and constructs new conceptual wholes: some of our most important concepts are of this character. All fiction is but the placing together of aspects which have been otherwise experienced in actual life; it is a conceptual construction which has a basis in actual experience for the elements out of which the concepts are formed. We *live into* a well written novel, feeling as though the characters are real, and while under their spell we pass judgments of value on them and their actions. But though value-judgments are passed on these conceptual constructions there seems to be an underlying implication "if they were real." The power of thought and its importance in this question may be seen in any example of constructive imagination. The conception of a perfect being, having perfect knowledge, being perfectly good and loving, in short, the conception of a Personal God—might conceivably be developed by this activity of thought taking elements from experience. Such a construction is the subject of a

value-judgment. But this value-judgment is found on analysis to be itself the result of thought construction: it is a synthesis of aspects of actual experiences of values, a synthesis which is then elaborated by thought. A value-judgment therefore, while it always has objective reference does not necessarily imply the objective reality of the "something" or "someone" corresponding to the conception upon which the value-judgment happens to be made.

Reference has been made, especially in the discussion of Kant's position, to the emphasis on "moral activity." Some conceptual constructions implying value may be realised in actuality by activity as *e.g.*, the plans of an architect. But some conceptions of "objects" or "conditions" which would be valuable "if real" cannot be produced by any kind of effort of ours. Religious "objects" are in part of this kind. The conclusion is thus reached that religious beliefs cannot be justified by value-judgments apart from metaphysical considerations.

A glance at Ritschl's chief use of the argument from value-judgments is instructive. He seems to imply that the values are "objectively given in history." "In Christianity," he says, "revelation through God's son is the *punctum stans* of all knowledge and religious conduct"¹⁵. "Whatever content may have been ascribed to this word 'blessedness' it expressly denotes a goal, the knowledge of which is unattainable by philosophy, and the realisation of which cannot be secured by the natural means at the command of men, but depends upon the positive character of Christianity"¹⁶. "Man needs the idea of the oneness of God and of the consummation of the world in an end which for man is both knowable and realisable: but this is fulfilled in Christianity alone"¹⁷. For Ritschl, therefore, the revelation, that is, the historic Christ is all important. The belief in Christ is justified by the impression he makes on the individual, by the satisfaction and moral response which arises from the apprehension of that personality.

15. *ibid.* p. 202.

16. p. 193.

p. 202. 17.

Ritschl thus uses the value-judgment as a means to justify certain Christian doctrines. Christ calls forth the value-judgment which honours him as God. The Godhead of Christ must be understood as an attribute revealed to us in his saving influence upon ourselves. "The truth is that we know the nature of God and of Christ only in their worth for us".¹⁸ Consideration of this value-judgment upon Christ will show the necessity of some other grounds besides value-judgments in order to justify beliefs. A conceptual idealised Christ is possible, and such would call forth a value-judgment. But this would involve, though not necessarily explicitly, the implication "if it be true". The value-judgment might predicate the highest value to a being corresponding to such a conception. And the conception of an ideal Christ might have had some basis in a historical figure, but factors and attributes may have been added so that the value-judgment having reference to the ideal Christ may be greater in implication than one having reference to the original historical figure. The conception of the ideal Christ as known today may be the result of a very gradual evolution: it may be the concept in which in the course, especially of Western history, ideals have come to be enshrined. The value-judgment gives us no ground for believing that the historical Jesus was identical with this conception. The judgment of value defines the "object" or "concept" as it affects the subject. Inference from the "good" to the actual is not valid: the "good" is not always known to be actual, and it may not be actual. Neither is inference from the actual to the "good" valid, for the actual sometimes at least appears not good. As the actuality of an existent is something different from its value, it is not possible to justify beliefs by value-judgments alone. Objective historical evidence is necessary to justify the ordinary Christian view of Christ.

On this question the followers of Ritschl are sufficiently alike to be regarded as a school of theology. The briefest

reference to a few of the more important will suffice for our purpose. Harnack¹⁹ says: "in the world of knowable objects" God has no place. Neither the meaning of life, nor the great reality by which our lives ought to be directed can be shown by knowledge. "It is by the will not by knowledge that we come into relation with God". Hermann is a pronounced Kantian, but follows Ritschl especially in his opposition to mysticism. Value-judgments constitute a form of knowledge superior to that of theoretical judgments: emphasis is to be placed on an *a priori* moral law and on the impression Christ makes on us. Kaftan, a later writer, seeking more positive relations between faith and knowledge, leans towards an empirical theory of cognition. He maintains that religious beliefs are theoretic: "The fact itself of the theoretic character of the propositions of faith lies clear before our eyes".²⁰ But these propositions are based upon value-judgments. This implies an inference from the value-judgment to an objective reality involved in the theoretical judgment which expresses the inference, and would appear to be an effort to give a more objective character to the implication of the value-judgment.

The evidence of Ritschlian influence in France both amongst the Modernist Catholics and the Liberal Protestants is largely due to the "Paris School of Protestant Theology", of which the foremost thinkers were Auguste Sabatier and Edouard Ménégoz. Their movement received the name of *Symbolo-Fidélisme*, which adequately represents its positive character. The uncertain epistemology of Ritschl gives way to a definitely stated Kantian agnosticism in Sabatier. For knowledge of the empirical order, for the use of reason in the Natural Sciences, he has the greatest admiration and respect. "Religion", he says, "will call forth and maintain within the heart of the scientist the

19. *What is Christianity?* Eng. trans. Crown Theological Library pp. 151, 163, 300, 301, etc.

20. J. Orr: *Ritschlianism: Critical and Expository Essays.* p. 59.

sacred, that is to say, the absolute love of truth".²¹ He quotes approvingly the words of Pascal; "The first of Christian truths is that truth must be loved before all else." But religious truth is different in nature from that of science: "the scientific knowledge of God, even if it were possible, would not be religious knowledge, for to know Him religiously is to know Him in relation to us".²² Theoretical knowledge of God, is however not possible. From the conviction that speculative judgments are inadequate for religious purposes and from the necessity of obedience to and communion with God, both Sabatier and Ménégoz were led to deny the value of the speculative judgment altogether. Metaphysics is of no value in the consideration of religious beliefs: theological dogmas are not metaphysical or speculative. The religious consciousness and the natural reason deal with diverse orders of things. Science springs from sensation; religious doctrine springs from piety.

The importance of ideas in the religious experience Sabatier was far from denying "Religious faith is a phenomenon of consciousness; God himself is its author and cause: but it has for psychological factors all the elements of consciousness:—feeling, volition, ideas".²³ "Piety is only conscious for us and discernible by others when incarnate in its expression or intellectual image. A religion without doctrine, a piety without thought, a feeling without expression, these are things essentially contradictory".²⁴ Both history and psychology taught him that doctrines are an essential element of the religious consciousness. The ideas or "dogmas" depend upon the subjective religious experience of the individual. At times he endeavours to avoid pure subjectivity by reference to the religious spirit of the community. Psychology and history take the place of metaphysics. They show that there is a constant change in the "dogmas" of religion. With his Kantian epistemology

21. Sabatier. *Modern Culture*. Eng. trs. C. T. Library, p. 212.

22. Sabatier. *Philosophy of Religion*. Eng. trans. A. Seed, p. 309.

23. *ibid.* p. 240.

24. p. 336.

it is easy for Sabatier to pass to the view that dogmas are purely symbolic and in constant flux. "The object of religion" he says "is transcendent ; it is not a phenomenon. Now in order to express that object our imagination has nothing at its disposal but phenomenal images and our understanding logical categories which do not go beyond space and time. Religious knowledge is therefore obliged to express the invisible by the visible, the eternal by the temporal, spiritual realities by sensible images ; it can only speak in parables. The theory of religious knowledge requires for its completion a theory of symbols and symbolism".²⁵ "The intellectual form which is renewed with each successive century will not allow our granting to the traditional dogmatic formulas any but a relative and symbolic value".²⁶ Thus "in dogmas there is nothing absolute ; dogmas are as all living things, in a state of constant flux and evolution" and "the intellectual will be the varying element in dogma." Sabatier will give to dogmas none but a passing worth ; as it has been appropriately said "his decisive dogma is the perpetual flux of dogma".

Subtly though it may be hidden, underlying Sabatier's exposition is the attempt to justify beliefs from their satisfaction of needs. It is the conflict of the theoretic reason and the practical reason which eternally engenders religion in the heart of man. The inner contradiction in consciousness is solved and the feeling of dependence is satisfied in entering upon the religious experience of communion with and prayer to God. The recognition of the contradiction in consciousness makes us rise to a "tertium quid". The immediate experience of piety gives a religious knowledge of God. Here Sabatier manifests a fundamental inconsistency. For, according to him it is in religious experience that God is known, and yet the acceptance of the belief in God is presupposed in rising to the religious experience. After an epistemological theory which disowns

the validity of inferences of thought to go beyond phenomena, the assumption of an immediate experience of God is not justifiable, unless by "God" is simply meant a name for the immediate experience itself, and does not imply any objective Being. This does not seem to be Sabatier's view, for he talks of prayer to and communion with God. His view presupposes the nature of God as Father and the sonship of man, as well as the personal relation thus implied. He will accept no conception of God but that of an Immanent Spirit who is omnipresent and ceaselessly active; in this he differs from Kant. He rules out materialism, deism, and other positions, but he makes no effort to give the objective justification for the adoption of the conceptions he requires.

Most of the criticism we urged against Kantianism is valid here. As applied to the theory of symbols the consequence of that criticism is to maintain that dogmas, if at all justified, contain something absolute in them. Only thus can Sabatier be consistent with his conviction of the validity of the theory of evolution: once admit something absolute in dogmas and the theory of their development is intelligible. At times he does seem to recognise something absolute and objective in them, but his Kantian relativism is too strong for this to have any marked effect on his general position. Much of what he says about the subjective power and value of symbols is undeniable, but even from the psychological point of view his theory is an inadequate substitute for the place of thought concerning religious beliefs, which are actually regarded by the believer as true. The importance of this objective reference which is ascribed to religious beliefs Sabatier does not appear to have grasped, nor did he attend sufficiently to the particular ideas involved in his own account of religion. From his position there is no way of comparing the symbol of belief evolved from our subjective need with a reality and of testing how far they are in accordance. "The key to Sabatier's theory," says Dr. Orr, "is to be found in the continuous struggle in his nature between heart

and reason, between religious need and the claim of the intellect, of a scientific view of the world of which latter he finds continuous unbroken evolution the ruling idea".²⁷ Occasionally Sabatier sees that a higher unity is needed, and he states his belief—something like Kant and Lotze—that in a teleological view of the world, the ground for such a unity may be found. He says: "While developing themselves on parallel lines, can science and faith remain isolated? Man is one, and his scientific activity like his religious activity tends to synthesis. The synthesis will be found in a teleological consideration of the universe. This universal teleology, faith predicts, and science labours to realise. It can only be established by this twofold occurrence."²⁸

²⁷ *op. cit.* ²⁸ *Philosophy of Religion* p. 82.

CHAPTER III

HISTORICO-CRITICAL SURVEY: RECENT WRITERS

More recent philosophical and theological literature also presents many examples of distrust of thought which we have found so prevalent since Kant, and this distrust is again accompanied by efforts to justify religious beliefs by appeal to non-rational grounds. Nowhere are these two phases more clearly combined or more carefully stated than they are by Professor Höffding. Höffding's theory of knowledge is essentially Kantian, though with modifications. He brings the charge of relativity against knowledge from several different points of view, but he is at the same time impressed by the need of some principle of unity. Thus he arrives at a *Critical Monism* as contrasted with the *Constructive Idealism* of Hegel and the later Idealists.

At the outset Höffding is confronted by a fundamental doubt: "It is possible that the relation between our knowledge and reality is an irrational one. Reality may possibly present differences which our knowledge will never be able to reduce to identity and continuity; possibly there may be differences of quality which cannot be resolved into differences of quantity, and individualities which cannot be explained as the highest points or nodes in a continuous process."¹ We should say not "may possibly be," but certainly "*are*", though this does not justify a distrust of thought. The aim of philosophical reflection is not to reduce all to identity, or to represent qualities in the form of quantity. It would seem that for Höffding knowledge is predominantly such as is found in the natural sciences; and

1. *The Philosophy of Religion*. Eng. Trans. 1907. p. 31.

even this he regards as based on axioms or assumptions, which are to be verified in experience. But, as experience is inexhaustible the complete verification of such first principles is precluded, and so an objective conclusion to our knowledge is impossible. Further, Höffding maintains that, as thought consists in the relating together of concepts, it is impossible by its means to reach a thought which has no relation and is therefore absolute. The virtual denial of *a priori* necessities of thought leads to the ultimate implication that human knowledge is characterised by an inevitable relativity. "For our knowledge itself is a part of the whole of Reality and to assume that the whole of Reality must be comprehensible by us is to assume that the Whole can be perfectly represented by a particular part, an assumption which, in and for itself, we have no right to make"². "We have no right to assume that we have sufficient data to determine that which is the foundation of all things, and which therefore cannot be characterised by any of the particular forms of existence which are exhibited to us in experience"³. In short, "critical philosophy.....asserts that our ideas are not adequate to express that which exists outside the form of our limited experience."⁴ The grounds of this charge of relativity must be considered individually.

The contention that knowledge is a part of Reality and that it is not possible for a part to represent the Whole is in some sense admitted by most philosophical thinkers. But the implication depends upon the meaning of "whole" and "part" in this connection. It does not seem impossible that there should be *knowledge* of the Whole. Knowledge of a feeling is possible. One experiences a feeling and knows that one experiences it. But such knowledge is not the feeling and does not repeat the feeling: the two things though inseparable are not identical. The charge of relativity is only justified if Höffding has as an ideal of knowledge actually identical with being. The ultimate knowledge

for which we contend is not absolute being itself. The fact that knowledge is relative to being cannot be denied: knowledge owes its absoluteness just to this relation to absolute being. This fact does not justify the attitude of Höffding.

The second reason for the charge of relativity: that we have not experience of the Whole of existence; that as there are relations throughout existence we cannot fully know the nature of the existence of which we at present have experience; and consequently that we cannot justifiably argue from this to the nature of the Whole, also has some force. But though the recognition of some truth in this contention should discourage dogmatism, the statement itself should not be treated as absolute. The obvious answer to Höffding is that the fact that we have not experience of the Whole is no reason why we should not make the best use of the knowledge of the experience we have. It is Reality as we experience it with which we are concerned, and there is no adequate ground for the assertion that our knowledge of that is merely relative. If we argue (as does Höffding himself)⁵ from the principles of the constitution of Reality as we experience it to a Whole of Reality of greater extent it is not that these are regarded as more probable than any possible principles (which might become known after more experience) but that they are more probable than any others based on the same experience, that is, on Reality as now experienced. To take up a predominantly sceptical attitude towards the knowledge we now claim to possess, on the ground of our ignorance of an assumed greater portion of existence as yet unexperienced, is unreasonable.

Psychology and history teach Höffding, as they did Sabatier, that in every religion, and especially in the great popular religions, "knowledge is certainly not without importance", though the basis of religion must be sought in other sides of the spiritual life than in pure thought. "An important side of religious development consists precisely in

5. See below page 301.

the quiet influence exerted on feelings by knowledge." "Action and reaction are constantly going on between them, even though the element of feeling is predominant."⁶ Religion consists chiefly in an appreciation of values and in a will attitude. For Höffding, as for Sabatier, religious ideas are symbolical, and in this they differ from those of metaphysics only in being richer in colour and more tinged with emotion. If religious ideas are to possess any significance at all it can only be in serving as symbolical expressions for the feeling, the aspirations and wishes of men in their struggle for existence⁷. The previous criticism of Sabatier's view of the symbolical character of dogmas will apply here also. It is, however, important to add that Höffding does not discuss the fact that religious beliefs are held to be true *i. e.*, to involve objective reference, by those who hold them.

Religion, according to Höffding, is concerned in its innermost essence not with the comprehension of existence but with its valuation. The psychological and historical study of religions leads him to the conclusion that the 'core' of religion consists in the "*conviction that no value perishes out of the world.*"⁸ This is the axiom of the conservation of value. Though the form may vary this is the only necessary belief for religion. Now "the nature of a being determines its needs and its needs determine what shall have value for it."⁹ "The religious axiom therefore shows that the character of a religion must necessarily be determined by the nature and the needs of the men who profess it."¹⁰ The axiom is supposed by Höffding to be justified on "positive grounds by a psychological investigation of religious experience and religious faith."¹¹ The extent of the implication of the axiom is not clear in Höffding's exposition. This becomes very evident in the discussion of the relation of existence and value.

The axiom is to be verified in experience—but experience for us is incomplete: therefore, like the axioms of

science it can never be completely verified. Considering that the verification is of this empirical kind it is surprising to learn that "There are no definite empirical values in the conservation of which we can believe."¹² Thus, for us, religion is to be essentially faith in the conservation of value, though what value is to be conserved we do not know! The axiom is nowhere shown to be a necessity for thought; it is not based on conclusions of thought; it is not yet empirically verified, and as there are no empirical values in whose conservation we may believe, it is difficult to see how it can be so verified. Nevertheless, "we live by realities," says Höffding, and "base every possibility on a reality." For "we live by values which reality produces and these values do not necessarily fade, because their fate in time and in eternity does not lie open before us."¹³ Though Höffding considers the pessimists briefly, he does not succeed in demonstrating that the axiom is involved in their thinking and acting although they are not explicitly conscious of it. In his theory of knowledge he contended that from the character of the limited portion of existence experienced by us we may not justifiably infer to the nature of the Whole. But here he is himself striving, from certain feelings in this experience, to justify a principle which is meant to be universal in its scope—the axiom of the conservation of value. Though the axiom is held by faith, it is a work of thought taking the feeling of value as its starting-point, and under the stress of the need of an optimistic view of the nature of Reality, passing to a continuity of value in some form or other in the Whole. Höffding himself, therefore, passes from a *portion* of our experience, and this surely is more unjustifiable than passing from an examination of all our experience, which is the position he previously criticised.

The axiom may be a necessity of the religious attitude, but that attitude does not itself appear inevitable. The axiom is accepted not because the objective world compels acceptance, but because it is in harmony with the desires

and needs of the subject. But as it implicates the objective world its justification must depend to some extent on the result of an examination as to the nature of the world. "We cannot pass," says Dr. Galloway, "simply from the appreciation of value which is subjective, to the persistence of value as an objective principle in the universe."¹⁴ No connection is shown between the causal series in the objective world and the value series in the mind of the individual. The axiom seems to represent no more than a possibility: yet Höffding maintains that we live by "realities," not by possibilities. Recognised merely as a possibility the axiom does not generate much force, nor accord much joy. Further, no actual religion is simply an expression of the conviction of the conservation of value. Höffding has given us something like a common denominator of religions. Closer attention to the development of the complex religious consciousness to its highest known forms would have led him to acknowledge that thought has a greater share in the formation and the justification of beliefs. He would also have seen that these beliefs are varied and complex. Finally, does not some value consist in the intellectual comprehension of existence? If so, value will not be in mere feeling but in the complexity of conscious experience including thought.

One result of the revolt against Absolutism is a greater attention to the nature of human personality. Modern Humanism insists that our nature being personal all experience is implicated by personal reference. No part of that experience can be properly understood except in relation to human purpose and evaluation, and any effort to comprehend Reality apart from such reference must end in inevitable failure. "End" and "purpose" are fundamental categories and Reality is to be studied with relation to a *terminus ad quem*. Human beings, being real agents in this process towards some *terminus* must be recognised as sharing in the making of Reality, and in so far as truth depends on the Reality thus made, they share in the making of

14. *Review of Theology and Philosophy*. 1907.

truth. Human ideals and purposes are real forces. Humanism maintains that Absolutism and intellectualism generally, in abstracting from the temporal aspect of thought and the content of feeling and purpose in the temporal, de-personalises truth, championing abstractions which have little value, and little if any validity. Yet it is quite clear that "Human motives sharpen all our questions: human satisfaction lurks in all our answers; all our formulas have a human twist." Truth for us is human: any view of a transcendent Absolute quite beyond the human is meaningless and valueless. Humanism is thus a relativism.

The force and importance of these contentions cannot be doubted. Humanism is to be criticised not so much for what it affirms as for what it appears to deny. Even though it is impossible to eliminate the distinctly personal and human from our knowledge there may still be something absolute in knowledge. For Humanism absolutely to deny this would involve a contradiction. No advantage is gained by an assumption of the agnostic attitude, that if there is something absolute in knowledge we cannot know it. Humanism has nevertheless emphasised some aspects of human knowledge to which philosophy has not always done justice. The human point of view is distinctive, as also is that of the particular individual—and our experience of Reality is from some such particular point of view. Reality as seen from the standpoint of a different being is not Reality as it is known to us. But this does not imply that the truth for us is inconsistent with the truth for others. A statement valid of Reality from the human point of view might be ultimate for human beings. It may be justly said that this conception itself savours of relativism, but it is no mere relativism. The ultimate truth for man would be a consistent system arrived at through the intersubjective intercourse of different individuals in the evolution of the race. Unless the human is, or becomes, identical with the Absolute, there may be a difference—but not an inconsistency—between the ultimate truth for man and Absolute

or complete Truth. But *such* an Absolute Truth does not necessarily exist: if it is experienced it must be by an Absolute Spirit. The question is hardly of importance to us, if we fully recognise the aspect of absoluteness in truth for men. Thoroughgoing Absolutism and thoroughgoing Relativism both appear for human beings untenable theories of knowledge. For their positive attempts to justify religious beliefs the adherents of this Humanism may be classed with the Pragmatists.

The best-known of modern movements endeavouring to justify beliefs by their satisfaction of needs is that of Pragmatism. As in the other instances already considered this is also associated with a distrust of thought. Intellectualism was described by William James as the theory that for any "knowledge of ours to be quite true it must be knowledge by universal concepts rather than by particular experience." This, even if valid, is only applicable to extreme forms of Absolutism. James saw only one alternative: either an excessively rationalistic Absolutism or an anti-intellectualistic Pluralism. Knowledge about things only touches the outer surface of Reality; it does not make clear "how" an event takes place. "Our intellect," says James "casts no ray of light on the processes by which experiences *get made*." The intellectualist is condemned for raising questions not relevant to human needs. Yet surely if any questions are irrelevant the one mentioned and that "Why there should be any reality at all" (raised in "*The Will to Believe*"), certainly are. Because of their futility most thinkers refrain from discussing them.¹⁵

The intellect is the outcome of practical interests, metaphysical and theoretical contemplation is an issueless channel.^{15a} Only those propositions can have real meaning and truth which lead to some effect on conduct. Feeling impels us to act, perception and thinking are present for the sake of that. "From its first dawn to its highest actual attainment we find that the cognitive faculty, where it appears

¹⁵. Cf. Lotze. *Outlines of Metaphysic*. Eng. trs. Boston, 1893 pp. 158-9.

^{15a}. *Will to Believe* p. 75.

at all, appears but as one element in an organic whole and to exist as a minister to higher mental powers—the power of will.”¹⁶ In the religious life thought ‘finds arguments for our convictions, for indeed it *has* to find them. It amplifies and defines our faith, dignifies it, and lends it words and plausibility.”¹⁷ A hypothesis is true if it “works satisfactorily”, if it satisfies our needs. The meaning of a proposition thus lies in its application, and in this also lies its verification. An idea “*becomes* true, is *made* true by events. Its verity is in fact an event, a process: the process namely of its verifying itself, its *verification*.”¹⁸ The truth of a proposition is thus identified with its verification.

Pragmatism does not seem to recognise *a priori* propositions in their true character, although the arguments of the Pragmatists really involve them. For underlying the Pragmatist criticism there lies a hidden rationalism. It presupposes the intellectualist account of truth. The test of consistency is accepted. For example, James says “our *final* opinion about God can be settled only after all the truths have straightened themselves out together.”¹⁹ Again there is recognition of “correspondence” in some sense, of the relation of thought to an “objective reality”. In the world of natural science both James and Schiller admit an “other”, and “coercions of the sensible order”, but contend that we do not know how far our tendencies will be thwarted till we try. Yet notwithstanding the reality of our agency in experience, Reality is determined in the main apart from our agency. Success in relation to the world of nature is possible, therefore, only if our thought and action conform to conditions which our purpose does not constitute. We try to verify our judgments before we act, and this has given birth to “science”. James and Schiller also both recognise coercions of “the ideal order.” “Our ideas must agree with realities, be such realities concrete or abstract,

16. *Ibid.* 140.

17. *Varieties of Religious Experience*, p. 436.

18. *Pragmatism* p. 201.

19. *Ibid* p. 109.

be they facts or be they principles, under penalty of endless inconsistency and frustration".²⁰

The type of verification possible in the natural sciences is not possible for religious beliefs. Again, as James states, there is a class of propositions which cannot become truths till our faith has made them so, as e. g. when a man, inspired by faith leaps successfully over a precipice. But it is clear that there is a limit to these propositions and even in them there should be an effort previously to obtain the greatest aid that thought can give in order to avoid disaster.

As the test of a doctrine's truth consists in its consequences, that is, in its satisfying needs, this necessitates a distinction between consequences. For what we ordinary call "false" propositions have consequences no less than "true" ones. And "true" ones do not always bring pleasant consequences. Some propositions which satisfy our intellectual needs are even unsatisfactory to us from the point of view of our emotional and moral needs. "Truth" says James "should it cease to be profitable would thereby cease to be true". But this obviously depends upon the meaning given to "profitable". James talks of working "satisfactorily in the widest sense of the word",²¹ and in that case a proposition might be profitable even in satisfying the intellectual need. But *then* all that is distinctive of Pragmatism would be given up. It is by the minimising of the satisfaction of the intellectual needs that Pragmatism is distinctive and dangerous. James regards the two propositions "it is true because it is useful", and "it is useful because it is true" as identical. This could be so only if the "useful" is taken to include the satisfaction of the intellectual needs. If the narrower emotional satisfaction only is meant, the identification is an unjustifiable assumption.

The narrower tendency is seen more especially in definite examples of use of the method, as those referring

to religious needs and religious beliefs. James wishes to vindicate "our right to adopt a believing attitude in religious matters, in spite of the fact that our merely logical intellect may not have been coerced."^{21a} The least opportunity to go in the direction of one's feelings may therefore be taken, for "no fact in human nature is more characteristic than its willingness to live on a chance."²² Dr. Schiller says the opportunities of this kind are not many, for "the freedom to believe what we will is so checked by the consciousness of the responsibility and risk attaching to our choice that this part of the doctrine becomes little more than a device for securing an open field and a fair trial to every relevant possibility." The argument to the belief in God gives us an example. The "need of an eternal moral order is one of the deepest needs of our breast":²³ "the notion of God. guarantees an ideal order that shall be permanently preserved";²⁴ therefore the belief in God is justified. "Our volitional nature must, until the end of time exert a constant pressure upon the other departments of the mind to induce them to function to theistic conclusions."^{24a}

If the use and value of a doctrine for human life is to be the test of its truth, it is obviously necessary to have a "norm" of what "use" and "value" in human life consist. The test may be individual and perhaps hedonistic—and Pragmatism would seem to encourage such a view—or it may be merely social, or it may transcend both as in the philosophy of Eucken. The nature and the relations of values require more careful examination than Pragmatists have given to them. Would a proposition be true which satisfied what we are accustomed to call "immoral" or "irreligious" purposes? At one time James says "The true.....is only the expedient in the way of our thinking, just as the right is only the expedient in the way of our behaving."²⁵ Here again the whole question depends upon the meaning of "expedient": if the widest view is taken

21a. *Will to Believe* p. 1. 22. *Varieties*, p. 526. 23. *Pragmatism*, p. 106.
24. *Ibid.*, p. 106. 24a. *Will to Believe* p. 127. 25. *Pragmatism*, p. 222.

there is nothing distinctive in the position. To make it distinctive it must be supposed that the expedient is that which temporarily appears most beneficial: such a view would lead to an excessive individualism and to little stable development towards an all-inclusive ideal of values. For the development of a high state of moral and religious life the utmost use of reason is necessary. Ultimately we can be satisfied only if we have a metaphysical consideration of the moral and the religious experience in relation to experience as a whole. We are concerned not merely with a universal and objective ideal of values, but also with the present and the possible future relation of facts and values.

Pragmatism arose largely from a purely naturalistic psychology. The researches of some American psychologists, especially those of James himself, into the nature of the religious experience considerably increased the tendency to voluntarism and emotionalism. The majority of these investigations gave no adequate consideration to the environment in which the experience had developed. They were very limited in their range, and often included abnormal more than normal cases. The common elements, chiefly emotional and volitional, were adopted as the essential nature of religion. James himself seeks the real basis of explanation of religion in the subliminal consciousness. Justice is not done to the place of ideas in religious experience, and this in face of the fact that great ideas have been among the strongest forces in man's religious development. Religious feelings cannot justifiably be abstracted from the associated beliefs: the total complex is affected by the beliefs. James quite unjustifiably passes from the common denominator of such experiences to the idea that they are due to the direct and immediate presence of God to the soul. The variety of religious experiences—being put forward as the basis of many conflicting beliefs—do not at least *prima facie* seem likely to spring from the action of God. Previous ideas, due largely to environment, affect the nature of the total experience, and the occupation of the mind with

some of these ideas may be the chief cause of particular complex experiences. The history of Mysticism gives examples of many such cases in which the mystic thinks he has experienced by intuition the truth of ideas and beliefs in which he has been trained. Intellectualists would agree with James that it is hopeless to endeavour to demonstrate the "truth of the deliverances of direct religious experience", for there does not appear to be any question of truth or falsity involved. It is the truth of any theoretical explanations of such experience which is the concern of thought. James argues from the immediate religious experience to a "MORE of the same quality which is operative in the universe"²⁶ and he interprets this "More" as "God". The precise meaning of this term is not clear in James' writings but he gives it a fuller content than is immediately implied by the experience referred to. For example, He is an agent, for "God is real since He produces real effects".²⁷

Belief is defined by James as "thought at rest." Seeing that thought is not always able to come to rest itself the passional nature may bring it to rest. Sometimes it seems as though the passional nature is brought in explicitly only "when alternate theoretic formulas are equally compatible." "*In concreto*, the freedom to believe can only cover living options which the intellect of the individual cannot by itself resolve."²⁸ Again, Schiller says that calm reasoning and logical cogency is on the whole of greater pragmatic value than emotional exhortation. With regard to many questions the non-Pragmatist is willing to admit that his beliefs are only probabilities. But it appears that the Pragmatist may make them "truths" by willing them to be such. There is no real need for this, though James thinks that action can only "firmly and safely begin." when thought has come to rest. Nevertheless experience shows that action and religious life are possible on the

26. *Varieties of Religious Experience* p. 508.

27. *Ibid* p. 517;

28. *Will to Believe* p. 29. cf. pp. 11, 75.

basis of a probability, or even of a possibility, recognised as such.

Pragmatism emphasises the important fact that life is a process and that human beings are real agents in the universe. Its strength lies in its insistence on the effect of action and conduct in the world. But this is independent of its theory of knowledge. Primarily a method based upon a theory of Reality and truth, in its narrower and only distinctive form it does not satisfy our intellectual needs and thus on the wider Pragmatic test is not true. "Pragmatism" says Mr. Chesterton, "is a matter of human needs, and one of the first of human needs is to be something more than a Pragmatist."²⁹

Views similar to many of those previously discussed above have been commonly held by adherents to what has been described as "Modernism" in the Roman Catholic Church. Many Modernist scholars are engaged chiefly in subjects of historical and scientific research, and they apply their modern methods of study to the records of religion and the Church. Although in *11 Programma dei modernisti* (1907) they profess that their philosophical attitudes are only tentative, the predominant philosophical position is fairly clear, being in the main that of Blondel,³⁰ Le Roi,³¹ Laberthonnière³² and von Hugel³³ all of whom in many ways resemble Bergson in their general attitude. As George Tyrrel was the most prominent writer in English who best illustrates the tendency of the Modernists in the matter of the justification of beliefs, the present reference is occupied almost solely with some of his works.

The movement was inspired through and through with a desire for a "concrete" living religious experience as distinct from the concepts of belief, which in their intellectualistic form appear abstract and static. Great emphasis

29. *Orthodoxy*.

30. *cf. e. g. L'Action*. Paris 1893.

31. *cf. e. g. Dogme et critique*. Paris 1907.

32. *cf. e. g. Essais de philosophie religieuse*. Paris n. d.

33. *Mystical Elements of Religion*. 1908.

was therefore placed on the priority of religion as spiritual fact to its expression as theological creed. From Tyrrel's *Much Abused Letter* it is abundantly clear that much in the movement arose from the desire to reconcile the needs of the religious spirit with the demands of modern knowledge. For the Modernists have great faith in reason in natural science and history. In consequence they find it impossible to accept as scientific and historical fact what is implied in some of the traditional dogmas of the Church, interpreted literally. Yet they are quite opposed to abandoning these dogmas and severing themselves from the corporate religious life of the Church. To avoid this they propose a different conception of "dogma" and its interpretation.

The Modernist conception of dogma involves undoubtedly a marked degree of agnosticism and distrust of reason, as the Papal Encyclical³⁴ rightly insists. Knowledge in which reason is valid seems to be limited by them to the phenomenal, somewhat in the manner of Kantianism. Nevertheless in the writings of Tyrrel many passages and discussions indicate his acceptance of the idea of a theology formed by thought through an examination of the religious experience. "For theology, as for every true science, I have the profoundest respect. By theology I do not mean abstract theosophy, or theodicy, or natural theology, but the fruit of philosophic reflection on the facts of religious experience, among which facts the Apostolic revelation is central and normative. Nor do I mean this or that particular system of Christian Theology, but any system so long as it preserves its free scientific and critical attitude, and claims no other sort of authority than that of reason."³⁵ And further: "Theology and ethics as intellectual interests must be free from the direct control of faith with its practical and religious interests."³⁶ It is difficult to understand, in such case, what unity there may be between

34. *Encyclical Letter of Pius X on the Teaching of the Modernists.* (Eng. trs.) Dublin n. d.

35. *Through Scylla and Charybdis.* 1907. p. 350. 36. *Ibid.* p. 27.

these intellectual efforts and religious faith. The history of human thought in the past bears sufficient witness that philosophic reflection seeks to comprehend the whole content of experience in a definite unity, and its demands in this direction are still imperious.

The most evident feature of the Modernist position where the difficulty of an intelligible unity is most keenly felt is in relation to the distinction between "truths of faith" and "truths of fact." Reason can tell us of proximate ends, of nature and of history, but "the ultimate ends with which they are continuous lie in the darkness beyond into which faith peers, in that whole of which sense and reason give us but some infinitesimal fraction. But though our belief as to the character of that whole be a free choice by which we stand or fall self-judged; yet it is not an arbitrary or capricious choice but one based on a power of vision that is conditioned by our self-formed character, by our moral dispositions."³⁷

The emphasis here evident on the side of faith is associated with greater attention to the moral, a method to which M. Laberthonnière has given the name of "Moral Dogmatism". The dogmatic affirmation of reality is reserved for the moral will. "Not otherwise than by moral effort can man lay hold upon the ultimately real. To know it he must by the concrete purpose of his moral life have made it his own." Tyrrel and the French Modernists have many sound criticisms to make against Pragmatism, but their attitude appears at times almost ultra-Pragmatic, as when Tyrrel says: "It rests with each of us to create the sort of world to which we shall accommodate our thought and action."

Similar to the Pragmatists' and Bergson's attitude toward ideas is the Modernist conception of dogmas. These are to be regarded as analogical expressions of the religious life of the community as growing round a divine revelation. Dogmas have primarily a practical value as

37. *Much Abused Letter* 1906, p. 57-8.

expressions of the religious life, and as means of communication in the Church. Though as terms and propositions they remain the same, seeing that language is, as such, comparatively static, the content is subject to the change implied in growth in accuracy and comprehension. Religious beliefs are determined by the religious aspirations and needs of the individuals sharing in the common life of the community. Their only justification is their spiritual fruitfulness. The theory of dogmas is associated with that of two planes, implied in the distinction of truths of faith and the truths of fact. The truths of the higher plane are only expressible by us in terms of the lower plane. On the lower plane science and history may reject certain dogmas or propositions. Nevertheless, as expressions of the truth of the higher plane, which they socially represent in the Church they are justifiable and to be accepted. We are to suppose that "truths" moving on different planes do not conflict.

The chief criticism that suggests itself with reference to the Modernist effort to justify religious beliefs is that it implies practically the same fault as Kant's agnosticism and suggests also a repetition of something like the Kantian dualism. The underlying principle appears to be, when clearly stated, that reason is incapable of dealing with what is beyond the world of scientific and historical fact. Such an attitude is quite unnecessary and indicates a certain impatience. What makes the Modernist position important is its emphasis upon the social and historical reality of the religious experience, as something to be given its due weight as part of the empirical facts of life. None can exaggerate the importance of the contention that the different types of the religious life must be recognised as an essential part of the data for the exercise of reason but this is no justification for talking of two planes. It is a ground simply for emphasising the importance of recognising different types of experience within one whole.

In Modernist writings and especially in those of Tyrrel there is a constant repetition of the term "life", but though this is in some way put forward as giving the desired unity, there is very little to show how the different planes of fact and of faith are harmonised within it. "Each is right in its own order of truth, each wrong in its trespass on the other's territory: both right only when they listen and learn from each other and strain after that perfect accord which belongs to their ideal perfection".³⁸ But if the terms of the lower plane are the only ones we have for expressing the truths of the higher, if they give any idea at all of those truths, there must be some underlying unity of conception. Otherwise the terms of the lower plane would give no suggestion at all of the truth on the higher plane. For "perfect accord" and unity there must be some function of the mind which can grasp the relationship between the two planes, or, as we should say, groups of facts, or types of experience. Moral activity, feeling, mystical vision, and intellectual activity or knowledge must be brought together in definite relationship, if the demand for a single consistent comprehensive attitude is to be satisfied. It is not enough that intellect shall deal with the "natural" or "phenomenal," and mystical feeling or moral will with a sort of "super-natural": reason must view the whole in intelligible relations. If the Modernists had recognised in dogmas a definite element of reason affirming a truth grasped by it, and had seen in the development of the content of dogmas and in the growth of modern science the different activities of one reason striving towards a goal which reason itself might understand and accept, it would have been far less open to the opposition it met, and would have been one of the strongest forces in modern Christianity.

38. *Through Scylla and Charybdis*, p. 233

CHAPTER IV.

THE NATURE OF HUMAN RELIGIOUS NEEDS.

The previous discussion has been occupied with an examination of writers who treat almost entirely of what might justifiably be called the formal side of the problem. Few of those writers have investigated religion empirically. Such an investigation is in our judgment indispensable for any profitable study of this subject. Closer attention is also required to the meaning of the terms used. The conception of needs is only a recent one in theology and is not yet clearly defined. In consequence of this much superficial writing has confused the issues, because no attempt has so far been made to elucidate the idea itself or to consider what are rightly to be included amongst human needs. To take one example only, important because the attention of the reading public concerned had been directed to the author on other grounds, we mean the position of Dr. Figgis in "The Gospel and Human Needs." He urges the acceptance of certain doctrines on the ground that man has need of what they imply, and this even in cases of doctrines concerning which it is not clear what needs they do imply. To assume, e g. that man "needs mystery", and to base on that assumption an argument for belief in certain doctrines—taken to include the required mysteries—is to adopt a form of apologetics as dangerous as it is simple, which moreover leads to obscurantism. Whatever the degree of validity of the form of argument we are considering, it is almost self-evident that the nature of the needs should be established, and individual beliefs related to them.

'Needs' is essentially a metaphysical conception, but, as such, it must have some relation to psychological facts. Psychology talks of 'conative tendencies', which form the active factor in consciousness, in its endeavour to realise certain aims in relation to the objective world. Needs lie behind these conative tendencies of which they are the source and in which they first become evident. All activity involves a relation of subject and object, and the nature of the activity will depend on the nature of the subject, and specifically on its needs. Subjective needs give rise to activity exerted upon the objective world. Metaphysically, it might be urged that needs are what they are because of the ultimate nature of the objective side of reality, since only thus would there be a real unity of the subjective and objective aspects of existence. The discussion, like that of belief and of validity, is thus partly psychological and partly metaphysical. In contrast with the statements of modern writers on these subjects (but indeed in agreement with their actual practice in most cases) we do not suppose that the psychological and the metaphysical can be kept apart. Every psychology appears to imply a particular metaphysic as every metaphysic a particular psychology.

Some of the errors in the use of the argument from human needs have arisen from a failure to distinguish between needs and desires. The former must be conceived as wants, without the satisfaction of which the subject of them is imperfect. A perfect being has no needs; human needs in their totality imply an ideal of human perfection. The presence of error and sin in human experience shows that some conative tendencies turn towards ends other than those involved in perfection. Desires, as distinct from impulses, are conative tendencies defined by the presence of an idea of the aim. Needs express themselves in desires, but not all desires are the expression of needs, for a person may desire what is in opposition to his needs. The distinction is most clear in reference to the physical :

men may desire kinds and quantities of food, drink, rest, exercise, opposed to what are physically requisite. As with the physical, so with the spiritual. Some of the general characteristics differentiating needs from mere desires may be stated briefly. Desire is always conscious and may be good or bad, i. e. it may be for something not related to true well-being, and may even be detrimental to it. The distinction of good and bad is not applicable to needs; and individuals or even a whole race may have needs of which they have no conscious knowledge. A desire may be modified or deliberately and entirely suppressed without satisfaction; it may be in the highest degree capricious and is often transient. Needs continue until completely satisfied or until the extinction of the subject of them; they can be modified only by partial satisfaction. Desires are based upon some actual previous experience, while needs exist prior to any specific experience. Mere desires, therefore, generally have an individual and temporary character, while needs express themselves rather as generic appetites, or as definite tendencies to function, having the essential relation to the permanent nature of the subject experiencing them, so that their satisfaction is fundamental to the attainment of the ideal. A desire is often for what one thinks one needs; for consciousness of the nature of needs may come only with the success or failure of the activity that is rooted in them.

Few if any would maintain that a belief is justified in satisfying desires in the sense above defined, for as desires of one time conflict with those of another there would arise inconsistencies in beliefs. But the fact that desires are sometimes mistakenly supposed to be the expression of needs is no ground for failing to notice the distinction between desires and needs and assuming a negative solution to our problem. This would shut off from consideration empirical data of considerable importance for the study of religion and for philosophy.

The needs with which we are concerned are the needs of man, that is, human nature would not be what it is without them. If these needs are not rooted in the very being of man, it is difficult to see how they could have an objective implication such as is necessary in order to justify beliefs. In all ages moral and religious teachers have been keenly alive to man's restlessness, his longing for "somewhat"; and it has been their effort to show how true satisfaction is to be obtained. It is, therefore, from a belief in a universality in human nature; from the broad basis of similarity underlying the peculiarities of individuals, that the study is undertaken. This does not overlook the possibility that individual human beings may manifest distinct needs of which others have so far not shown any signs. Unfortunately the sciences of anthropology, the psychology of religion, and the comparative study of religions, upon which we rely for data for our study are only in their earliest stages.

It is clear that men are conscious of some of their needs, but that there are others of which individuals and even whole races may not be aware. Needs may be vaguely felt but their real character not properly known. In fact it seems as though it is only in the higher stages of religious development that needs and their precise nature are to any extent fully known, and beliefs apprehended as giving at least partial satisfaction. The knowledge of human needs may be best obtained from considering the religious psychology of some great religious teacher and saint. To take a supreme case: we might ask what human, religious needs Jesus was conscious of, and to what extent His doctrines, life and death may be looked upon as a means of bringing men and women to a consciousness of their needs and the proper satisfaction as known to one such as He. An interesting study would be an investigation as to how far the great religious teachers revealed needs previously unfelt. From this point of view one may recognise the importance of the statement of Mr.

McLeod Campbell that our true need should be measured not by the sense of it but by what God has done to meet it.¹ Most human activity is the outcome of human needs. Some activity is due to the effort to satisfy mere desires. Progress lies not simply in the satisfaction of needs of which we are conscious at a particular time, but also in becoming conscious of other needs. One of the most important and most difficult tasks of the religious prophet or priest is to awaken in the mind of the apathetic a consciousness of needs not yet felt. This he may do by means of teaching certain doctrines, inculcating certain beliefs. For the consciousness of a need may be induced by the consideration of a belief which is held to satisfy it. Persons who do not feel particular emotions try to cultivate them because they have learned from others that they ought to feel them.

The social nature of man also expresses itself in his needs. Seeing that religion is so much a social experience needs ought to be considered from the standpoint of the highest developed religious social whole as well as from that of the highest developed religious individual. The spirit of the social whole may lead to fuller manifestation of the divine than is possible for the individual. For it will include manifold relations of diverse individuals each of whom may have some characteristic contribution to make. Such unity of the diverse is of the utmost value since through it life is immeasurably richer. "Ought we to wish that religious life should always be after one pattern ! That were as absurd as to wish that in nature life should take one form. In creation the immeasurable richness of formations in which the creative power finds expression moves our admiration. What right have we to complain of the same thing in the world of men ? " ²

1. Dr. J. Oman. *Problem of Faith and Freedom* 1906.

2. Wimmer : *My Struggle for Light. Eng. trs.*, 1903.

The absence of any consensus of opinion as to the nature of actual needs is chiefly due to the neglect of their study, and to the necessity of distinguishing them from their form of expression, which depends not only on the stage to which thought and language have evolved, but also on the adequacy and accuracy of the analysis implied in their expression. Different races and individuals at the same time, and the same race and individuals at different times, have held diverse and even contradictory beliefs and these appear to involve diverse and contradictory needs. The solution of the difficulty of apparent contradiction must be sought in the indication of faulty analysis and expression. Allowance must also be made for human development; for, with the satisfaction of some needs others become clearer, and through the total or partial satisfaction of the latter further advance is made. Historical and comparative studies should seek for evidence of greater comprehensiveness and consistency in conative tendencies, beliefs and practices. Consciousness of needs and what is offered to satisfy them should, in the language of Bergson, be "in process of being adapted to each other and making towards final rest in a common form."³

Needs may be classified either as physical and spiritual; or as physical, intellectual, æsthetic, moral, and religious. Human perfection demands the satisfaction of all. The present discussion is limited to moral and religious needs. The reality and universality of the latter is now rarely denied, though some may say with Spencer: "Religious creeds, which in one way or other occupy the sphere (life and mind) that rational interpretation seeks to occupy and fails the more it seeks, I have come to regard with a sympathy based on community of need."⁴ "Men will not rest in peace until they have a Faith; they cannot consent to forego a religious sense of duty and reverence"⁵

3. *L' Evolution créatrice*. 3rd ed. Paris 1907. p. 399.

4. *Autobiography*. 1904. ii. P. 471.

5. F. Harrison, *Philosophy of Common Sense*, 1907. P. 427.

Religious needs may be studied directly, by inspection and psychological analysis, or indirectly, in the historical and comparative study of religious beliefs and practices—i. e., by a consideration of the methods which men have taken to satisfy needs, and the degree in which such satisfaction has been real and enduring. Though religious rites and doctrines are of the most diverse character and in the course of history have undergone innumerable changes, it does not follow that the underlying needs are different. Evidence shows that the consciousness of religious needs and the capacity for satisfying them are subject to development. Though some needs are revealed by the persistent elements in religious experience, the factors which differentiate religions are also of fundamental importance, for in them lie the results of evolution and the grounds of superiority. The attitudes of primitive races and times must be considered from the point of view of more advanced peoples; and the moral and religious needs of the latter must themselves be estimated with reference to those individuals who have been more or less generally recognized as the highest religious characters of the community or of humanity as a whole. For needs of a higher kind have been brought to light and partly or entirely satisfied by religious saints and moral teachers. Capricious and temporary desires have no real and abiding effect on the evolution of religion. Most sociological studies of religion are vitiated by the assumption that religion is to be best understood by the consideration of the common denominator of religions.⁶ Yet, where the influence of ideals is so great as in morality and religion, neglect of the higher forms seriously limits the trustworthiness and diminishes the value of conclusions respecting the lower and more primitive forms. The "highest" needs are in some manner present from the beginning; one might say of them what J. F. Ferrier says of principles, "They have influence and indeed operate

6. e. g. E. Durkheim, *Les Formes élémentaires de la Vie religieuse*.

largely and powerfully long before they come to the surface of human thought and are articulately expounded.””

But if, on the one hand, changes in the consciousness of needs lead to modifications of religious doctrines and practices, on the other hand, changes in the latter may bring about clearer consciousness of the former. The process of religious and moral evolution is made possible by man being at once an individual mind and a member of a social group. The influence of the social environment tends to make the individual conscious of his needs; but the effect of society does not always make for progress, since doctrines accepted by men through social pressure may lead them to fancy that they have real needs corresponding to these doctrines, which, if false, will thus hinder the religious life of the individual. What appear to be religious needs may only be temporarily acquired tendencies due to beliefs adopted as a result of traditional and ecclesiastical forces, as, e. g. the supposition of needs to which many Christians have been led by unethical ideas of salvation. Up to a certain point, however, history and religious organizations aid the individual in understanding and appeasing his needs; and, if doctrines can be shown on independent grounds to be true, their acceptance will lead to development.

When we come to the actual nature of religious needs, the naturalistic theories which reduce religion and morality to mere means must be declared inadequate. H. R. Marshall regards religion as simply serving a valuable function in the biological evolution of the human race, leading to the suppression “ of the force of individualistic elemental impulse ” in favour of something higher.⁸ B. Kidd similarly thinks of it as having its essential value in restraining the individual for the sake of the biological future of society.⁹ E. Metchnikoff interprets the desire

7. *Institutes of Metaphysic*. Edinburgh, 1854. p. 48.

8. *Instinct and Reason* New York 1898.

9. *Social Evolution* 1894 p. 97 ff.

for immortality merely as the physical impulse to go on living.¹⁰ In contrast with all such theories; one of the most important and constant factors in human history has been the answer which religion has given to men's undeniable metaphysical needs. Religion has also answered needs other than those of the inquiring intellect, for religious experience is not simply a promise of satisfaction, but is itself a real satisfaction in which the soul finds actual and present peace and rest. "If religion is a practical need, the response to it can only be a practical action. No theory will suffice. Religion is nothing if it is not the vital act by which the whole spirit seeks to save itself by attaching itself to its principle."¹¹

Beliefs can, therefore, be fully understood only in relation to this wider complex attitude of the spirit. The social character of moral and religious needs is fundamental, the individual finding complete satisfaction only in an active life in a "Kingdom of God."

A short consideration of some prominent religious and ethical beliefs in the light of the preceding principles will indicate some human needs and the methods of investigation. The beliefs in God, immortality, and a way of salvation are the most important and best repay study. The most advanced conceptions may be our starting-point. All attempts to conceive of God as supra-personal end in representing Him as less than personal: the "religious consciousness demands a personal God: no profound and enduring relation to the non-personal is practicable."¹² "If man is to be successful in the struggle, he must be persuaded that he is not alone, or in the language of religion, that God is with him, and that therefore nothing can be ultimately against him."¹³ R. Seeberg maintains that man needs a

10. *The Nature of Man*, (Eng. trs.) 1908 p. 157.

11. A. Sabatier. *The Philosophy of Religion*. 1890 p. 28.

12. G. Wobbermin, quoted by G. Galloway in *Review of Theology and Philosophy*. Edinburgh iii 199.

13. A. Seth Pringle-Pattison. *The Philosophical Radicals and Other Essays*. Edinburgh. 1907. p. 270.

"near firm object" on whom to depend and a "Goal far-off" at which to aim¹⁴; and R. Wimmer thus expresses some of the needs which belief in God as personal satisfies: "I must trust"; "I must give thanks"; "I must worship" "I must lovefully and entirely surrendering my whole heart."¹⁵ Judged from the standpoint of actual human needs as far as they are known many of the attributes included by theologians in the idea of God do not seem necessary. Professor J. H. Leuba appears to us historically and psychologically right in contending that the power need not be omnipotent, omnipresent, omniscient, infinite or supernatural. What the need does essentially imply is a spiritual being with power and activity towards the good. "Learned divines, speculative philosophers, and natural theologians," says Dr. Bussell, "have for long directed attention to certain attributes which have never in the mind of the worshipper enforced belief or sustained enthusiasm".

Emphasis has within recent years been placed upon the idea of divine immanence: this owing probably to the study of nature and to the recognition of its inherent uniformity. Many of the more popular and one must say, transitory – forms of apologetic have been the presentation of an idea of God as wholly and solely immanent. Would a God who is simply immanent in the consciousness of individuals and in the world, suffice to satisfy man's needs in this direction? The verdict of an empirical study is definitely opposed to such a proposition. The "Other" in religious worship is in the great majority of cases regarded as objective, and psychologically it is necessary to believe in this objective reality for the idea of God to give any real satisfaction. Every believer's God is to him more than his own idea of God, or than an immanent principle. It is only in some of the extreme forms of, for example,

14. *Fundamental Truths of the Christian Religion* (Eng trs) 1908.

15. *My Struggle for Light*, p. 5 ff.

the Indian *Samādhi* that this conception seems to satisfy, but this may be, as we have before suggested in another connection, because a doctrine to this effect has become so firmly impressed on the mind as to obscure other aspects-aspects which if once comprehended might show the inadequacy of the merely immanent idea of God. "The lowest fetichism witnesses to the great truth that man must go out of himself in order to seek for an adequate Object to his heartfelt devotion — of his highest enthusiasm"¹⁶.

Prayer is essentially the outcome of practical need. Its evolution from a predominantly non-spiritual to an ethical and spiritual character indicates the course of development of the consciousness of needs and of the idea of God sought to satisfy them. Dr. Farnell has not been able to find "any example of a savage prayer for moral or spiritual blessings."¹⁷ A higher stage is reached by the psalmist: "My soul thirsteth for God, the living God." In its highest form prayer is for conformity to the will of God. Deification in ancient times; mariolatry and saint-worship in the Middle Ages; the virtual deification of 'humanity' as a 'being immense and eternal' by the Positivists; the religious attitude of Spencer towards 'the Unknowable'; the proposal of Haeckel to base a religion on the theory of neutral monism, regarding the cosmic ether as a divinity; the attempt to supply an ideal for human effort and an object of worship in the conception of the Superman. are all evidence of man's need "to enter into some vital relationship with an Other". The question, therefore is not concerning the reality of the need, but its actual and full nature, and as to the character of the 'Other' which will be a complete and rational satisfaction. A merely immanent principle never has done justice to the requirement of mankind: God must be conceived as a real objective Being. The feeling of dependence implies

16. Liddon H. P. *Some Elements of Religion*, 2 1872,

17. *Evolution of Religion*. 1905.

simply the need of a Superior Power. The application of the term 'Father' to this Power suggests that man has felt the need of other qualities in God. The historical and comparative study of religions gives us as a common denominator the idea of a Power (or powers) at least partially friendly; but only the notion of God as personal is adequate to the needs of which mankind has now become conscious. "If there is a belief beyond all others which is a necessity of the soul, it is the belief in the Divine Love"¹⁸.

The belief is a sure ground for the authority of the moral conscience; it points to a source of consolation in trouble, of help towards righteousness, and of hope for the future, and leads to communion in a fellowship which, unlike human relationships, gives perfect peace. The history of religion manifests a more or less consistent development of the consciousness of needs resulting finally in the belief in God as personal. "I surveyed the history of men, and I found that all nations have felt the necessity of bringing their finite being into fellowship with the Infinite, and I found that this necessity is the basis of all phenomena of religion"¹⁹.

But it must not be supposed that all is plainly and straight-forwardly on this side, although undoubtedly the evidence for it vastly preponderates. A writer in the preceding century has expressed the negative position very forcibly: "Each individual is working for himself solely and solitarily, expressing only his wants and strivings, when busy about the idol labelled 'God' ". After considering various aspects of the problem of evil she feels that what man needs is "not God" rather than God. "To such of us who feel in this manner, a universe whence the First Cause has been banished, like the Gods of Lucretius, seems a thing too good to be true. And some of us have felt a new lease of moral life accompanying the gradual or sudden recognition that all we know of good or evil is confined to

man; and that the ambiguous divinity who has tortured us with good instincts and evil examples, is but a Frankenstein monster of our own making"²⁰. In this impressive passage one thing is very clear, the need which the writer feels of limiting the evil as far as possible: but it is equally evident that the evil (as we know it, and we have no ground to postulate other) is in no way diminished by banishing God from the universe. The need might be expressed in another way, that if God exists, His nature shall be completely good. But the writer, feeling intensely the problem of evil, seemed unable to reconcile the evil in the world with such a conception of God. From the point of view of what is positively implied her need is the same as that of those who maintain a belief in God, and the difference is chiefly that she omits consideration of many other needs which they feel equally strongly.

The desire for immortality is not universal, and the contradictory beliefs concerning the destiny of the human soul necessitate a careful analysis to see whether any common needs may possibly underlie beliefs and hopes so different as those of immortality and extinction. Some of the most thoughtful men of the Western nations are indifferent to the question; some definitely desire non-immortality; others, however, consider the question of immortality as of more consequence than that of the being of God. In the East the predominant attitude is rather opposed to than in agreement with the Western conception of individual personal continuance; what seems ultimate salvation is release from all re-birth in the form of finite individuality. Dean Inge has even gone so far as to say that "The hope of immortality has no necessary connection with religion" a phrase which is ambiguous in the term "necessary connection". Professor Osler has summarised the attitudes in the West, so far as he has himself observed them, and his conclusions deserve lengthy quotation. "While accepting a belief in immortality and accepting the phrases and forms

of the prevailing religion, an immense majority live practically uninfluenced by it, except that it ministers to a wholesale dissonance between the inner and the outer life, and diffuses an atmosphere of general insincerity". "A second group, larger perhaps today than ever before in history, put the supernatural altogether out of man's life and regard the hereafter as only one of the many inventions he has sought out for himself. A third group, ever small and select, lay hold with the anchor of faith upon eternal life as the controlling influence in this one". "The desire for immortality seems never to have had a very strong hold upon mankind, and the belief is less widely held than is usually stated". "As a rule a man dies as he has lived, uninfluenced practically by the thought of a future life"²¹. Essentially in agreement Mr. Lowes Dickinson who also regards the normal attitude as one of indifference, insists that though the majority cannot he said to desire immortality they would nevertheless object to the idea of extinction. "Yet most men perhaps in some moods and some men continually do reflect upon the subject and have conscious and definite desires about it", though not all desire immortality.

The question to be considered is what common needs, if any, underlie these different attitudes. It cannot be maintained that those who say they do not desire immortality, and see no reason for it, as a class adopt a less serious attitude towards the present life than those who believe. An insight into the desire for extinction is given in the words of an anonymous writer: "To the troubles of this world theological dogma has added those of the world to come: and our real consolation is that we no longer believe it". Such persons are evidently impressed by the evils of the present: to them in comparison its goods and any which seem to them possible in the future sink into insignificance. Underlying this is the positive need of good, of perfection. The very dissatisfaction with life as

it is shows their underlying need of a different type of life: in its fulness their need, of perfection. The negative attitude is the result of an absence of faith or of the conviction that such a perfection, or at least a great predominance of the good, is possible or even probable. They have centred their attention too much on the aspect of evil in the actual. "It is relevant to ask those who acquiesce in or desire extinction, whether or no there is some kind of life which if offered to them securely they would be willing to accept after death"²².

Those who express a desire for immortality seem to be more impressed by the good in life and the possibility or probability of good in future. But why do they look to the future? Again, because they are not wholly satisfied with the present circumstances. As a rule they would not be satisfied with the prospect of a mere continuance of the type of life they now live. They need a greater good, and on account of the striving for that good they say they desire immortality. Recognising the insufficiency of the actual they centre their attention and hope on the "ideal". The indifference of the majority of men to the idea of immortality receives explanation in a similar manner. Viewed in a general way their lives are a mixture of almost equal amounts of good and of evil: their experience is neither extremely bad nor extremely good. They need perfection, although they may not feel the need at all keenly, and although the general level of their lives does not arouse them to ardent desire.

We contend therefore that there is a common need underlying these diverse and even contradictory expressions of desires. This is an example of the difference between needs, and desires which a man sometimes rightly, sometimes wrongly, thinks he needs. Religion has been said to be "the supreme realisation of the instinct of preservation - an expression of the longing of every soul for continued life". The common need implied is for a type

of life which is essentially better than this, if not indeed perfect. "The most significant thing in spiritual evolution is that we have a creature actually existing who has become dissatisfied with his old environment. His past and his present are not enough for him. He consciously lays hold of the future"²³. Let us hasten to say that the first effect of sound ethical development is to quiet the impatient questioning and to rebuke many of the insistent demands. The question of the duration of life is not in the foreground, it waits on the prior question of the quality of life.²⁴

It is worth while considering which of the two expressions, immortality or extinction, best suits the need. The positive character of the belief in immortality is a distinct advantage. One of the most important characteristics of the good, as Plato insisted long ago, is permanence. Further, the effects of the two doctrines respectively on the moral life give ground for a preference for the positive belief. The ethical need has always pointed most towards the belief, for the human spirit feels that in its development it cannot halt at the boundaries of the earthly life. "The natural basis of a belief in immortality", says Dr. E. Caird, "is the fact that we can live a life which is wider and higher than our own here and now." The expression "immortality" is frequently used in a manner which is not quite suited to the need. The tendency is rather for it to encourage too great thought of the future, and this is no doubt one of the causes of opposition to the belief. The reality and value of the present are not to be overlooked. In fact a true view of immortality is possible only when the relation of time to eternity is adequately considered. It is largely on account of the different attitudes to this question that the different positions of East and West as to the idea of immortality are to be ascribed. A view which places the entire fruition of life in the future does not seem to be

justifiable : present goods, whether physical, intellectual, aesthetical, or moral and religious, are elements in the *bonum consummatum* not to be forgotten. No single moment ought to be regarded simply as a "means" for other moments, though this is not inconsistent with allowing some moments greater value than others. The essence of life must be, as Mr. Lowes Dickinson says "the continuous unfolding, no doubt through stress and conflict, of those potentialities of good of which we are aware here as the most significant part of ourselves". "At the bottom of every human soul, even of those who deny it, there lurks the insatiate hunger for eternity ; that we desire in Browning's phrase, something that will

‘ make time break

And let us pent up creatures through
Into eternity our due.’"

The experience of man is the experience of a discord. Man feels the need of a spiritual peace, a harmonious life. He meets with temptation, sin, suffering, and disappointment. Salvation ultimately means salvation from the incongruity between our lives as actual and our lives as represented ideally. The consciousness of sin and the desire in some way to obtain real salvation is more pronounced in the experience of the Theist than in that of the non-Theist, since the former looks upon sin as essentially disharmony with God. The poignant sense of guilt has been most prominent in the lives of the greatest saints, such as St. Paul, St. Augustine, St. Francis, and John Bunyan. "The need is a universal one" says Harnack "... Everywhere men ceaselessly yearn for deliverance from their servitude into a nobler form of life.....To be pure and to possess inward peace is the longing of longings" Wherever the sense of guilt is deep and agonising conscience seeks for some effectual atonement. The question is again as to the precise character of the need and of the type of belief which may satisfy it. Sacrificial rites and doctrines of redemption and atonement have been persistent and almost universal elements in religion. "There is an

immense *a priori* argument for the truth of some atonement - past, present, or future, some way of realising and feeling that we are *at one* with God, from the need, all but universally felt in human nature, of some way of approaching God."²⁵ The source of the Buddhist desire to be free from the sufferings of life is the need of harmony.

Salvation has been defined as a "progressive advance of the individual in moral excellence and spiritual knowledge". The ultimate harmony is in the attainment of the morally good, the true, and the beautiful, in an ideal and complex unity of life. Only by effort can this harmony be attained. Each aspect will involve a particular form of effort: for example, what we may call intellectual salvation will require intellectual effort directed to particular problems. So again the individual person may have a particular contribution to make to the satisfaction of the need for harmony. From this point of view "My personal need is simply for a chance to find out my rational purpose and to do my unique duty."²⁶ Harmony or salvation is progressively attained, in the process of intellectual, moral, and spiritual evolution dependent upon each and all. It seems, however, that as there is need for active endeavour, so also there is a felt need of a ground for optimism, for a belief or attitude that the harmony will be achieved. Upon this attitude and the belief expressing its underlying spirit, all action may be said ultimately to depend. The persistency of human effort is only intelligible with the general conviction of humanity that Reality is such as to give us satisfaction, if not now, finally, if we act in accordance with its nature. There is only partial truth in the statement of Seeberg: "Religion is optimistic, but its professors are pessimistic". In the spirit of optimism Dr. McTaggart has found what is most essential in religion. Even Buddhism maintains the possibility of attaining peace, the state of Nirvana, however that may be interpreted.

25. J. M. Wilson. *The Gospel of the Atonement* 1905. Lecture II. (Cheap edition p. 19.)

26. J. Royce. *Hibbert Journal*, vol. V p. 744.

Except on the assumption of a form of metaphysical singularism, for which the individual person and the whole are ultimately identical, this optimism requires for its basis something more than the individual has in his own self. Though salvation is essentially an inner personal experience of harmony, to attain which the individual's right directed effort on all sides of life is necessary, this cannot be reached without adjustment with what we may call external nature, with other human beings, and with God or the fundamental power in Reality. We may to some extent adapt nature to our needs, but we have more obviously to adapt ourselves to it. That it can be adapted to our needs, and that we can adapt ourselves to it, are facts pointing us to the fundamental power in Reality as in some degree affecting both. Adjustment with other human beings might be viewed from various sides, but here attention is possible to one aspect of the moral only. The need of forgiveness among human beings for wrongs done to one another is so commonly felt that one could scarcely be challenged in affirming it as universal. On the other hand, it is equally clear that genuine repentance and genuine forgiveness bring about personal adjustment and harmony as nothing else can, and that with such harmony there comes co-operation for common aims. To those who regard sin as also a discord between the sinner and God, adjustment with the fundamental power of Reality will in like manner involve forgiveness. To overcome the alienation from God repentance is again necessary. But even among human beings themselves the wrong-doer must know or believe that the other forgives him, before he can experience the satisfaction of salvation and harmony. So again, to feel definitely and indubitably readjustment with the ultimate principle of things, in a word, with God, it is necessary to be assured of the attitude of forgiveness on His part. The force of these facts cannot be fully felt except by those who are able unhesitatingly to accept the correctness of the conception of the

relationship between men and God as one between persons.

The root need expressed in beliefs in salvation and atonement is thus that of harmony in place of a felt discord. This is seen to involve not merely effort, as physical, intellectual, moral and so on, but also a belief that Reality is such that the harmony may be attained. An important factor is forgiveness, from men and from God, and this implies the need for a ground for belief that this forgiveness is forth-coming. In connection with this need of salvation attempts have been made to justify certain beliefs concerning the nature of the person of Jesus and the character of his death. But when these are examined it is found that they are not free from ethical objection and moreover they do not appear to be in any way psychologically or metaphysically necessary. If the beliefs about the atoning blood of Christ, as usually interpreted, could be established independently we should strive for a consciousness of a need to which they fit. Yet "the one serious question.....lies here, whether there is any objective element. and if so what that objective element is." In his 'Gospel of the Atonement' Dr. J. M. Wilson has rightly called some of these beliefs "mythology," and goes on to say "Mythology shifts the drama of salvation from the heart of man to a transcendental region in which our responsibility is nil".²⁷ The belief that satisfies the need as we understand the need, is that by the service of the will to the claims of the good in every sphere in the confidence of final achievement men enter into unity with the divine and experience their Atonement. In words slightly modified from Dr. Wilson it may be said, "The unity of the divine and human life.....is the Atonement. There is no other "²⁸ *

27. *Ibid.* Lecture II (p. 49).

28. *Ibid.* Lecture II (p. 63) Dr. Wilson's words are "The identification of the human and the divine life.....etc." This seems to imply a metaphysical view of the relation of the human and the divine which the present writer does not accept.

* For a more detailed consideration of the nature of Atonement see my *Personality and Atonement*.

CHAPTER V.

THE JUSTIFICATION OF RELIGIOUS BELIEFS

The previous historico-critical studies led to conclusions which may with advantage be briefly summarised here. The distrust of thought and reason, to the extent found amongst most of the writers examined, who have directly or indirectly put forward the proposal that beliefs should be justified by the satisfaction chiefly of emotional religious needs, has been shown to be unwarranted, frequently leading to self-contradiction. Reason is not merely relative but has in its own nature something absolute. The argument from needs has very often assumed the form of an argument from value-judgments, and in this connection it has been contended that general arguments from judgments of value alone are not sufficient to justify the kind of beliefs which they are required to support. This becomes clear when these beliefs are considered in their particular nature. It was maintained further, that for the satisfactory treatment of the general problem and in order to pay the necessary attention to the individual character of beliefs and needs an empirical survey of both in their relation is required. In a cursory psychological survey and analysis, approached from the side of beliefs and from the point of view of the principle of development, it became evident that the apparent contradictions in beliefs and in alleged needs are not necessarily final, but that their removal depends upon an advance both in the consciousness of the nature of individual needs and of the form of the individual beliefs which will satisfy them.

An elaborate detailed analysis of the nature of belief may be dispensed with here. All that is required for the purpose of this essay is to emphasise two characteristics of beliefs. They are expressions of thought, that is, they are theoretical propositions and as such at least are addressed to the intellect. To the formation of the individual's religious beliefs - and out of the beliefs of individuals the doctrinal substance of social religion is formed - contribute on the one hand needs and desires, and on the other "meshes of logically connected ideas born of observation and reasoning upon the world" and one's inner experience. Though the adoption of propositions as beliefs is influenced by feeling, they are in their own nature essentially expressions of thought: they are cognitive, concerned with ideas. And, as soon as anything is expressed in the form of thought and language, it *ipso facto* places itself in a position compelling rational and critical consideration. On this ground alone it might justifiably be maintained that reason is the chief court of appeal as to the validity of religious as of other beliefs. The rock on which all contrary views come to grief is the intolerable inconsistency of appealing to reason and intelligence to deny reason. Dr. Schiller recognised this inconsistency in his paper on "The Pragmatic Cure of Doubt," but his discussion if after all an appeal to the intelligence. As Dr. Oman puts it: "The work of renouncing intellect is itself a very difficult intellectual feat."¹ Even if conation and activity predominate in human nature it is thought which has to recognise that predominance.

The second characteristic of beliefs is that these propositions are regarded as true by those who hold them. They may be accepted on grounds short of demonstrative proof such as is supposed to exist in those parts of some sciences, of which no instructed person feels doubt. In saying that a belief is regarded as true it is meant at

1. *Problem of Faith and Freedom*, 1906, p. 278.

least that the proposition is accepted by reason. The problem is in part as to the real nature of reason. In the mind of the person who would minimise the importance of reason this term far too frequently suggests the process of reasoning, as predominantly or solely the passing logically from one or more premisses to another. But it is evident that for any such process (1) the meaning of each proposition must be grasped sufficiently for the purpose, and (2) "in the last issue" it must be either accepted or rejected. Only so far as the meaning is known can reason accept or reject the proposition. The condition "in the last issue" is necessary because for the sake of argument one may state one's acceptance of a particular proposition or series of propositions, but if it came to the question of ultimate and genuine acceptability, reason might reject the proposition or propositions. The premisses and the conclusion of a process of reasoning must all be grasped individually and in relation to one another immediately by the reason. There is a definite meaning in saying that reason accepts or rejects, and that this acceptance or rejection does not necessarily admit of analysis. In other words, there is no test of reason itself. When we say that "thought has come to rest" we refer to this immediate grasp of the meaning, and the definite acceptance or rejection of the conclusion both in itself and in relation to the premisses. The important thing for our discussion is that when it is maintained that reason is essentially concerned in the justification of beliefs, it is not meant that a process of reasoning is required in every case, but that there must be acceptance in rational intuition. The process of reasoning may indeed be itself considered as a continuous series of rational intuitions. Rational intuition has the character of immediacy and the sense of finality found in all forms of intuition. But this does not imply that every proposition accepted by the reason of any individual at a particular time is therefore to be accepted always by himself or

others. Why this is so constitutes a most important consideration.

Reason does not function as something merely formal and abstract. Rather it is concrete, acting as it were in and through "apperception masses", formed through experience, less or more adequate, of the subject matter. Frequently reason is called upon to judge between what appear to be the only alternatives and it accepts one. Later, another possibility may become evident and the previously chosen proposition may be rejected. As an example, may be taken the famous argument with regard to Jesus, that either the claims he made are true or he was an impostor. Faced by those two alternatives many persons knowing the impression of the goodness of the character of Jesus they have experienced, have felt compelled to reject the latter alternative and to accept the former. Later, it has become sufficiently clear that there is a third possibility: that Jesus was no impostor, but being of extraordinary goodness and personal power, was the object of so much adoration on the part of his disciples, that along lines well known in human psychology, they made for him and even put into his own mouth claims he did not himself make. Reason can accept or reject only what is consciously apprehended, that is, it must be acquainted with the relevant facts. The truth with regard to reason itself seems to be, not that it is itself defective, but that it is beset with limitations owing to not yet being supplied with the whole of the necessary subject matter. "Where it knows the whole of its subject matter it judges with an authority that is beyond appeal; it has no inherent weakness".²

Distinction might with good grounds be made between the educated and the uneducated reason—though the term educated would have to be interpreted in the widest possible sense. Further, there must be insistence on the particular character of the propositions concerned. The

2. Illingworth J. R. *Reason and Revelation*. 1902. p. 67.

reason of the historian may be an educated one with regard to history, for in that reference he has formed "apperception masses". It may, however, be quite uneducated with reference to chemistry. The rational intuitions of the "theologically" educated must be looked upon as more likely to be correct on matters of religious belief than those of persons not thus educated. In passing, however, it is imperative to protest that by "theologically educated" here we do not include the majority of those called theologians at the present time. These are far too often men who are well informed on matters philological and historical relating to the sacred scriptures, doctrine and the history of the church, but have made no scientific study of the religious life. Many professors of philosophy also there are who with some psychological knowledge and an acquaintance with what previous thinkers have said about certain religious ideas, such as "God" and "Immortality", discuss the problems of religion, without having made an adequate study of the religious life in its diverse forms and implications, an empirical study corresponding to that which is rightly expected from one in any other sphere of research.

The fundamental motive underlying all active thought, whether expressed or not, is to view the aspects of experience as rational and intelligible. The implicit faith in all intellectual investigation is that the data with which the investigation deals may be grasped as factors in a scheme more or less rational and systematic. This is so whether the aim is purely intellectual or whether the knowledge is sought as a means to some other kind of satisfaction. Ultimately we have to recognise that reason "accepts itself," and that this is no more and no less circular than when, in using the term *self-consciousness* we mean that the self is aware of itself. The existence of elements of empirical data which do not at once fit into a rational whole is not regarded as a ground for reason to abandon its attitude, but rather as an instigation for more

arduous and careful consideration. "What is alogical now for A or B is not therefore destined to remain so for all men coming"³. If a distinction is made between what men really believe and what they may think they believe, it will be found that the former beliefs are always held because the world appears more intelligible with than without them. The test of the acceptibility of a particular proposition, even for common sense, is, in most cases, the extent of its conformity with the general system (more or less "ragged-edged") already accepted. Only occasional extraordinary experiences lead to such radical change in grouping or looking at the facts that one may justifiably talk of the acceptance of a new general system.

One distinct method of reason is its rejection of the contradictory, and its aim at general consistency. This is not disputed by anyone. The great difficulty is that of sufficiently careful analysis as to when propositions are in real contradiction. The fallacy of so many of the earlier Idealists has been to confuse the rational consistency of propositions with an actual metaphysical and ethical harmony of realities. Yet propositions describing a world full of oppositions and conflicts might form parts of a coherent non-contradictory system of propositions. The tendency, especially among Absolutists, is to talk as though they suppose that when they have fought for a consistent view of reality they have established the position that there are no ultimate oppositions in reality. For this attitude there is no logical justification. All that may be said is that we have no ground for believing that actual oppositions are irremediably and ultimately a characteristic of reality and so may proceed to enquire how those oppositions of which we are aware may be overcome. We may say at least that it is not irrational to accept the view that ultimately all reality may be harmonious.

On this ground, therefore, seeing that needs and beliefs are different products of the same reality, arising in, or in the case of beliefs being accepted by, the same human minds, it may be maintained that there is, in some form or other, a connection between human needs and the validity of the beliefs which will satisfy them. The important question, where the justification of beliefs is concerned, is, as we have previously urged, not as to any general principle, but as to the particular beliefs.

It should be a commonplace to say that the kind of evidence which reason demands for the justification of beliefs depends upon the actual character of the individual beliefs. Religious beliefs are the intellectual expression of the "objective" and the "subjective" sides of the religious experience, and the types of relationship involved. To give an adequate account of these beliefs would require a careful statement of the diverse thought contents of the different religions in their historical development. By speculative philosophers, abstract theologians, agnostic journalists and scientists, it is far too frequently overlooked that these thought contents or beliefs in the religions have been formed in relation with empirical facts of religious experience. To the particular individuals who experience these facts the presence of "objective" elements is not open to doubt. So also in the historical development of beliefs in the religious life of the community the objective aspects are sufficiently maintained. In reference to the former it is important to remember that religious beliefs are in the first place a personal and individual concern. The justification a person may suggest to himself for a particular belief may appeal to him from some peculiarly individual experience. For philosophy to refuse to recognise this is futile. If a philosopher is, for example, a genuine Theist, he must admit at least the possibility of God exerting influence in a quite distinct and individual manner on a distinct individual human being, and one such influence might be in

making a particular person aware of a particular need, or that a particular belief satisfied a particular need, or aware both of the need and the belief at the same time. To the individual experient in such cases, as those of religious and moral prophets, there is no doubt of the objectivity, although others may not have felt it till this particular individual brings it before them in a way in which they may obtain the same kind of experience. How particular beliefs or particular ideas originate in the mind, how they make their appearance in the history of the race, whether in religion or in any other sphere, is not clear, and although no more than one individual has the knowledge, it may nonetheless be truly objective.

The character of the objective is its inevitableness: it is not what we wish to think but what we must think. There is a feeling of compulsion about it. This inevitableness may be felt by one or a few individuals and not by others till a later time, or even perhaps never if they do not come into the particular conditions in which to feel it. It is radically wrong to treat what may be individually experienced as though it is simply subjective.

Nevertheless, it is clear that the beliefs with which philosophy and science generally are concerned are those which may become shared by all. In other words, universality is attributed to the truths which the beliefs are supposed to express. The correct representation of the distinction between what is objective for the particular individual and what is objective for all is one of the most difficult problems of philosophy and upon its solution depends also, practically, the increase of tolerance amongst persons of diverse religious beliefs. The objective for all has been described as that which "is so far detachable from the series of our private experience that it may be made an object of universal apprehension." But though 'detachment' may seem logically conceivable, it may be questioned whether it is psychologically possible. If a man uses the term "God", he means by it (1) a certain

particular concept, relating to (2) certain religious experiences, and these may include aspects entirely peculiar to his point of view, aspects which are to him just as objective as any others. The test of objectivity appears to be not so much an identity as a consistency of individual objectives.⁴ The activity of one individual upon another, "intersubjective intercourse", widens the experience of the different individuals in related ways, so that for those concerned there is a growth of knowledge and often also of language. Only such a conception of the "universal" and "objective", and not the common denominator theory, is adequate for the rational consideration of religious beliefs. Only such a view will enable humanity to arrive at a conception of religion, or of reality as known in the religious experience, which will be as rich in content as the religious life itself. The question is not: "What has this, that, and the other person, experienced in common, or might experience in common?" but "What is the richest consistent whole taking into account the similarities and the diversities of the different individual experiences?" Thus we are again led back to the necessity of a scientific study and a philosophic consideration of religious beliefs for which a wide empirical survey is essential.

Whatever its references beyond, religion for the individual seems more than anything else to have some of its most important roots in his own nature. So the propositions which he adopts as beliefs must have a definite relation to this. They must have that relation to his religious needs suggested in a wider reference to truth in general in the passage from Dr. Bussell "If truth is to mean anything to me it must be my truth; truth within my powers of apprehension and in relation to certain of my cherished aspirations".⁵ The individual may,

4. Absolutism regarding the individual objectives as ultimately not merely logically identical but also as metaphysically identical gets rid of the problem by virtually denying the metaphysical reality of individual consciousnesses as such.

5. *Christian Theology and Social Progress*. 1907. p. 166.

and often must, seek to justify to himself his acceptance of a belief by pointing to the authority of some other person or some corporate institution, — as the Muslims to Mahomet and the Christians to the Councils or other representative assemblies of the Church. This, however, is not to justify the proposition itself, but simply the individual's acceptance of it as a belief. The real justification must in the end be one which appeals to the individual mind, quite apart from whether others accept it or not. This justification being felt, the fact that others generally accept it will give, at any rate psychologically, a confirmation and a strengthening of the belief. And in the end, irksome though it may seem to the average individual, he can have no adequate, no serious and stable justification of his beliefs without the use of his own reason. Even though he may not himself seek grounds but only accept grounds put forward by others, his acceptance is an act of reason and the worth of his efforts to justify his beliefs will depend chiefly upon the serious persistent use of his reason, and upon the width of his survey of relevant facts.

Though the real justification for the individual depends thus on the exercise of his own reason it is not correct to represent this as predominantly individualistic, as does Mr. Kidd. As a matter of fact a wider and more varied influence is exerted upon the individual through speech and the printed page, that is, through that which appeals to thought, than is exerted in any other way. The power of contagious emotion and feeling may admittedly be stronger and more intense in particular experiences, but the range of persons affected is always less than those influenced by ideas, which live on through centuries. The development of a justifiable and satisfactory system of beliefs is a social and historical task. The majority of the ideas in the thought of the individual have been passed on to him through his life in the community, and these ideas have grown up in the experience of the race.

It is by thought expressed in language that he enters into this inheritance. Innovations and modifications made by individuals are not great except in the occasional instances of outstanding personalities. Nevertheless, the progress of knowledge depends upon the contribution made by the average thinker who confidently uses his own reason.

The contributions which can be made are of two kinds: first, the expression of some need, or the more accurate analysis of a need previously incorrectly or inadequately analysed; and second, the suggestion of a justifiable means of satisfying the need. Advance involves both of these. Needs are part of the data which thought must survey and consider when reason is presented with certain propositions for acceptance or rejection. On the other hand the propositions cannot be regarded as justifiable satisfactions of the need unless the other aspects of experience are also given due consideration. For the former a careful untiring analysis of the need is essential; for the latter a wide and penetrating examination of other facts and propositions. It is as wrong to leave the fact of particular needs out of account as it is to assume without thoroughgoing investigation that particular beliefs actually satisfy the needs and are justifiable simply on that ground.

From one side and from another we are led to the conclusion that though each belief requires individual consideration the acceptance of most beliefs will depend not so much on the particular evidence for them as upon their fitting into a general scheme of expressions more or less appropriate of a "type of life" and conception of "the world". The justification of beliefs which reason itself demands is not simply an abstract logical consistency of propositions but a consistency of propositions with percepts, with feeling and the active striving of the mind. Reason cannot accept propositions which are contradictory, in conflict with perceived facts, or in utter opposition to the persistent generic feelings and strivings of men.

Though these last may appear to be subjective, they have nevertheless just as much claim to consideration in philosophical reflection on the validity of beliefs as have those perceived facts which are usually regarded as objective. The fault of most of the positions previously discussed, showing distrust of reason, was chiefly that of dividing into two complete spheres what should only be considered as different realms or kinds of facts within one experience. One and the same reason is called upon to survey the whole facts and in relation to them thought must develop its system of beliefs. The creed or scheme of beliefs (with ragged edges, no doubt) will be rather a " philosophy of life " than a " cosmology " in the older sense. It will do justice on the one hand to the nature of the human soul in all its concreteness and particularity as a knowing, feeling, and active subject, and on the other hand to the character of the world, other than itself, in which it lives. This indeed is the kind of justification the reason of the average educated believer in any particular religion seeks when asked to give a reason for the faith that is in him. For each particular religion is, as such, a type of life, and its world-view has its justification in its agreement with all sides of that life in relation to the world in which it lives. Here there is neither a scepticism towards reason nor an attitude which expects to find all established by merely logical intellectual operations. This general attitude of the ordinary educated believer is also the most justifiable philosophically. The difference between the theologian or philosopher from such a person will consist entirely in the greater care and penetration in analysis of needs and beliefs, in the wider grasp of facts, and the fuller appreciation of their meaning. The evolution of religion and of its implicated beliefs will show the same tendency, i. e. towards a more correct knowledge of the nature of needs, a clearer and more careful statement of beliefs, a more comprehensive understanding of the relevant data.

Every philosophy of life, every creed or scheme of beliefs, implicitly or explicitly involves some propositions in themselves ultimate. The critical consideration of these principles is to be regarded as the concern of metaphysics, usually best left to the metaphysician. But the more seriously any individual endeavours to justify his beliefs the more of a metaphysician must he become. In the main these principles may be said formally to transcend time relations, nevertheless it is worthy of notice that the knowledge of these principles amongst men begins at particular points in time.

The fact just mentioned turns the attention at once to the historical, and in this connection two things must be insisted on : first, the possibility of the attainment of insight into other, at present unknown, principles ; and second, that principles are interwoven with empirical data with historical relations. The facts of experience owe a very large amount of their character, and very much of their significance to their historical relationship. Philosophy in the past has far too often neglected to take into account the historical, not merely in its formal nature but also in its concrete fulness. Leave out the actual continuous flow and interaction of the concrete facts of history in their individuality, and little else than merely logical formalities are left for thought. If human feelings and activities are to be taken into account, if the needs from which these activities partly spring are to be duly considered, then the course of human history must be carefully studied and its interpretation sought. As it appears to us reality is historical and a philosophy which does not recognise this is not a philosophy of life but of death.

This applies to the historical on all its sides. Especially however, in this essay attention should be directed to the facts of the history of religion as seen in the religions. When emphasis is placed again and again on the necessity for the philosophy of religion to be based on an empirical

survey of the data of religious experience it is not meant that the facts revealed by present psychological analysis shall alone be considered, but along with these also those of religious development.

All the great religions have definite contact not merely with the historical as such but also with particular historical facts. In the course of history men become conscious of their needs and in the course of history the grounds of their satisfaction are revealed. Some of these grounds may be actual individual historical facts, or experiences accepted as historical facts. The life of Gautama Buddha contains a clear presentation of certain deeply rooted human needs and further than that a noble eightfold path by which it is believed Gautama himself as a historical fact reached the peace of Nirvana. For many Christians the need of the triumph of life over death, of the powers of good over those of evil, seems manifested in the "tragedy" of the Cross and its satisfaction to be indubitably established by the physical resurrection of Jesus.

How far such beliefs as the realisation of Nirvana by Gautama Buddha or the resurrection of Jesus are based on actual facts must be left for historical science to try to ascertain. Again it may be held that what the historian accepts will depend in large measure upon the relations of particulars with the main plan. The particular event or personality while considered in its individual nature has also to be interpreted in relation with the whole historical development of which it is a part. In this task of the historian the claims of a rational intelligible system will be recognised, but it must be protested strongly that this does not imply mere mechanical uniformity, but may involve an immense variety of facts, many unique in character, and just on account of that uniqueness of the utmost importance. Whether the assertion of such particular "facts" is accepted or not may depend on the evidence presented in support, and the strength of this will depend in part upon the general philosophy of life held.

Though the famous dictum of Lessing will be generally accepted, that "Contingent facts of history can never be the proof of necessary truths of reason", it is becoming more clear that contingent facts of history may nevertheless be the means by which the mind is brought to pay attention to important truths. Truths may be revealed to the human mind through its experience of historical facts. But the significance of history for the consideration of the relation of needs and the justification of beliefs is chiefly that it presents an open possibility for the nature of human needs to become more and more clearly felt and understood and for thought to attain to an acceptable system of beliefs. What is required is an *attitude* of persistent endeavour to know the truth. Dogmatism, scepticism, and anti-intellectualism are chiefly due to impatience in the search for truth. To this it can only be said that a peace of ignorance and ease is dishonourable whether it disavows all knowledge or whether it claims to be already in adequate possession.

The justification of beliefs may thus, in conclusion, be said to be a task of reason functioning in relation to the relevant subject matter, part of which are the facts of human needs. Reason is called on to understand the propositions and in consideration of the empirical data to accept or reject them. In this task it will examine propositions individually in themselves, but even more evidently in relation to other propositions and to the whole nature of human life. The justification of beliefs will be almost entirely a question of the justification of a whole philosophy of life including a view of the world. A most important aspect of the empirical is its historical nature, and this is to be given its due in the philosophy of life. And the historical point of view gives room for confidence that sooner or later the whole of human needs will be accurately known at the same time that they will be met by a completely justifiable body of beliefs.

NOTES.

I. Besides the charges of relativity discussed in chapters II and III a further charge is sometimes based on the theory of evolution. It is contended that as man is at a stage of evolution his reason, as every other aspect of his nature, is defective. This argument has only to be consistently applied in order to refute itself. If the theory of evolution – a product of reason – involves that reason is imperfect, the theory itself must necessarily share in the imperfection. But it was only on the ground of the theory being absolute that it was thought necessary to apply it to the reason, and this absoluteness must be traced back to the source of the theory, i. e. reason. In his earlier writings Mr. Balfour put forward a charge similar to this, but as Professor H. Jones wrote concerning his view : “ The fact is, that on this basis there can be no criterion whatever of knowledge, and one is puzzled to know how Mr. Balfour has discovered that the sensuous material of knowledge is illusory and that the reason which operates on that material is defective ”. (*Hibbert Journal Vol. III.* 456). Try as one may it is impossible to escape attributing to reason an absolute nature. Metaphysics will insist that in some sense reason transcends evolution. But this is not to deny a real meaning in the idea of an evolution of knowledge. Such an evolution will be admitted in the manner suggested in the present chapter, as due to an increasing contact of reason with the data of experience.

II. Mr. Walker has drawn my attention to Henry Sidgwick's Essay : “ On the nature of the evidence for Theism,” (*Henry Sidgwick : A Memoir.* Appendix I,) in which the similarity between verification in the realm of science and in that of philosophy and religion is emphasised. It is contended that the more we examine “ the process of change in what is commonly accepted as knowledge, the more we find that the notion of verification by experience – in the sense of verification by particular sense perceptions – is inadequate to explain it or justify it. The criterion which we find really decisive in case after case, is not any particular new sense perception or group of new sense perceptions, but consistency with an elaborate and complicated system of beliefs in which the results of an indefinite number of perceptions and inferences are combined. Hence we are led to accept certain religious views as being, more than any other view of the universe, consistent with and calculated to impart a clear consistency to the whole body of what we commonly agree to take for knowledge – including knowledge of right and wrong – *we accept it on grounds analogous to those on which important scientific conclusions have been accepted.*” The method of justification of beliefs here stated in Mr. Walker's words is in essentials the same as that maintained in the present chapter. But if the difference in the subject matter of religious beliefs and the propositions of the natural sciences is remembered it will be seen that the statement (above p. 44) that “the type of verification possible in the natural sciences is not possible for religious beliefs” is not meant to deny an “*analogous*” form of verification in the general sense insisted upon, but that there is no similar method of accurate experiment by which all might be convinced.

CHAPTER VI

RELIGION AND RELIGIOUS BELIEFS

Throughout the preceding pages it will have become increasingly evident how the judgments on particular doctrinal propositions depend on the type of general religious attitude with which they are associated. No treatment of this subject can be adequate, therefore, which does not give at least a short account of the character of religion as a whole. This is in accordance with the previously mentioned demand of modern philosophy, not to abstract beliefs from practical life, but to try to consider the "toute ensemble", the "synoptic view". The account of religion here given is in the merest outline.

"Religion", it has been said, "is an affair of the whole man, social and individual, rational and emotional; not of the heart alone, nor of the head alone, nor of the individual alone". In harmony with the contentions of Bergson with his insistence on "intuition"; of James with his "radical empiricism"; of Eucken with his "spiritual immediacy", and very many outstanding writers on religion, it must be insisted that religion in its fullness can only be known by experiencing it. Religious faith implies rational conviction, moral approval and activity, and the feeling of love and trust, all in a complex psychological unity in a life attitude in relation to beings known and worthy of approval, in the supreme issue, in relation to God.

The modern psychological and historical study of religion has emphasised the social character of the religious experience. The individual adheres to the religious practices and beliefs very largely because he shares them with others in his felt unity with them in the religious life. Individuals here and there may break away in

particular ways but in the main it may be said that religion persists and "moves" as something social. The highest religious life seems to be not only a function of man's total mental nature as a particular person; but in its essence it is a social relationship, with other human persons and with God. The Christian ideal of the "Kingdom of God" emphasises this social character of the religious aim. "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and its righteousness". "Let no man seek his own wealth, let him seek the commonwealth." The society on all sides, and not least on the side of "beliefs", exerts its influence as the most evident "authority". Authority is a guide till one comes to a stage of greater freedom, that is, to a stage of individual development in which one may explicitly understand and appreciate the nature of the capacity to initiate activity. In the exercise of this freedom the individual most often accords with the community as a whole - sometimes falling below, sometimes rising above it.

The social character of religion may be seen in part in its relation to the moral experience. In the ordinary mind morality is generally thought of as included within religion : e. g. an irreligious man and an immoral man are taken to imply the same thing. Although objection may rightly be taken to this as implying some confusion, there is a very real sense in which morality is included in religion. "Morality is religion expressed in conduct : as religion is morality epitomised in its eternal principle".¹ "Religion may be called the soul of morality, and morality the body of religion".² As a matter of fact *the appeal* of a religion is more frequently and powerfully made in the first place through feeling and the moral consciousness than through intellect. What appeals to us morally or emotionally may become the object of reflection and thus of a belief. For morality is not possible without the

1. Sabatier A. *Modern Culture*. Eng. trs. p. 211.

2. Harnack A. *What is Christianity?* Eng. trs. Crown Theological Library. p. 75.

admission of certain principles, which must be expressed in the form of doctrines. These doctrines may become a means of moral teaching.

“ Any and every emotion and sentiment may appear in religion ”, writes Professor Leuba, “ and no affective experience as such is characteristic of religious life ”. The more the religious experience of individuals, and the psychological character of the great religions is studied, the more the superficiality of such a statement becomes evident. The predominant feeling in religion is, in our judgment, undoubtedly that of trust. This is present from the lowest up to the highest stages. But in the highest stages it has developed into a genuine emotion of love. The religious feelings of awe, fear, and dependence are not quite the same as awe, fear, and dependence as found in relation to non-religious objects. Malevolence is undoubtedly a type of feeling which has no place in religion. It is the emotional side of religion which is most easily influenced, as the religious revivalist well knows. Yet a sensuous emotionalism, divorced from the willing of the good and the seeking of the truth, can hardly be regarded as other than irreligious. Even in the forms of pietism it has been harmful through its enfeebling influence: it has been far worse when it has led to forms of antinomianism as amongst some mystics, Western and Eastern. Only when reason has to some extent systematised experience can emotions become formed into balanced and stable sentiments.

The moral attitude and the emotions must after all depend upon the nature of the Object, or objects towards which they are directed. It is with the nature of this Object and the relation of men to It that the religious beliefs of men are chiefly concerned. Conduct in all its forms is motivated by thought as well as feeling: and the place of thought in religion is vital. Knowing what is higher than himself, the religious man so worships It that he is stirred to conduct in conformity with It, and

appropriate feelings are cultivated. But it must be remembered that in religion the uniqueness of the individual is perhaps of greater importance than in any other aspect of his experience. And though the doctrinal side of religion does in fact show great uniformities, it is wrong to expect or to require uniformity except in the few most important and best established principles. What we are aiming at is not uniformity so much as consistency in diversity. "It is no question of: *This religion is true: that religion is false*: everywhere we perceive growth, evolution, imperfection, striving toward perfection."³ "We all in varying degrees dream of mutual interpretation and progressive reconciliation."⁴ It is along the lines of an attempt to formulate a comprehensive and consistent whole of beliefs or doctrinal statement that it is possible to go forward to this perfection. What separates men in this direction is not what they affirm so much as what they deny.

Religion is predominantly optimistic: but it is an optimism which means faith in the final harmony of things, *so far as that is made actual by effort*. The neglect of physical, intellectual, and moral endeavour is justified by no form of optimistic religious beliefs. "Faith" says Dr. Bussell, "is loyal self-surrender to a cause not yet won."⁵ "For us, as for Job," says Dr. Caird "the essence of religion lies in the simple elementary creed that there is a divine purpose in our lives and that if we make ourselves its servant and instrument, it will be well with us, and if not, it will be ill with us."⁶ "Faith," says Dr. Inge, "is on the practical side just the resolution to stand by the noblest hypothesis; and on the intellectual side it is a progressive initiation by experiment which ends in experience, into the unity of the good, the true,

3. Boussset W. *What is Religion?* Eng. trs. 1907. p. 9.

4. Sabatier A. *Modern Culture*. p. 169.

5. *Christian Theology and Social Progress*. p. 75.

6. Caird E. *Lay Sermons*. p. 300.

and the beautiful, founded on the inner assurance that the three attributes of the divine nature have one source and lead to one goal. ”

The religious experience is not simply the active looking forward with confident faith to a condition in which complete good will be attained : it is a present value, is somehow a sort of foretaste of the peace and bliss which is surmised as the ultimate goal. The way to the goal, one might say, is not simply forward but also inward and upward. In so far as any real good is experienced the eternal is experienced. Writing of the essence of Christianity, Harnack has finely expressed this idea : Christianity “ is something simple and sublime ; it means one thing, and one thing only : eternal life in the midst of time, by the strength and under the eyes of God ”.⁷

The philosophy of life or creed likely most completely to meet the various human needs and to be accepted by reason judging all the facts is one which will give scope for activity, admit a richness of emotional life, and satisfy the demands of intellect. As theoretical systems the different philosophical creeds will first demand intellectual examination, but that is only part of the test. In consideration of the critical and empirical investigations of the earlier portions of this essay, a brief reference to the general types of beliefs may be made here, leading to the merest suggestion of Theism as the belief most justified when all sides of experience are given their due.

The materialistic and naturalistic philosophies of life need not detain us. The inadequacy of both to explain some of the most important elements of experience, and the impossibility of establishing the existence of matter apart from mind, are sufficient to justify passing over them without further consideration. But here, where we are treating of beliefs, it may be urged as final against these views, that they give no ground for any belief more than any other. Agnosticism has already been discussed in

7. *What is Christianity ?* p. 8.

some detail in the chapters II and III. All that remains is some form of Spiritualism or Idealism, for which thought is in some way akin to reality. Thought may be akin to reality in that they are regarded as identical : this is pure Idealism. It may, however, be akin to reality in that reality is a consciousness, or a plurality of consciousnesses, in which thought exists : this is Spiritualism, or Spiritual Realism. If it is maintained that there is one consciousness only, we seem to be faced again with the difficulty which appeared to be final against Materialism : there is no ground for justifying one belief more than any other. For to this Mind all that exists must be known – if it is knowable, – and its reason will be the only reason. If this reason is defective, can it accurately decide how it is itself defective ? If it is not defective, and is in touch with all its subject matter (and how could it not be ?) how could any false beliefs arise ?

The difficulties of Absolutism are seen to be much greater, when one tries to do justice to the empirical facts of volition and emotion, especially the facts of religion. The actual religious life appears to be undoubtedly pluralistic⁸ (often in the form of Theism, a modified form of Pluralism – as I understand it –) in the sense that it maintains real distinction between the worshipper and the worshipped. Theism differs from radical Pluralism in that it insists on a ground for the predominant unities in experience, both *a quo* and *ad quem*. The analysis of religious needs and beliefs helped to show Theism to be the most satisfactory philosophy of life.

The Theistic view may be approached from the standpoint of a dissatisfaction with the other views. But this is in itself insufficient : there must be an attempt to give positive grounds for believing the proposition affirming the existence of God as the correct repre-

8. Except in its earliest and Hinayana forms (which are rightly described as agnostic) this appears true even of Buddhism as a practical religion.

sentation of the "objective" side of religious experience. It has been contended that for religious experience as actually found God is "personal", that is, not anthropomorphic, but a self-consciousness. When, therefore, a person affirms his belief in the existence of God, as one of his sincere religious beliefs, he means that he regards it as a fact (other than his own idea of God) that a Personal Spirit of a definite nature exists in just the same way as he regards himself as existing. For it is only by his own experience as a person that he can speak intelligibly of the existence of any other person. "Let any functional psychologist," says an American writer, "try to act upon the idea of God and no matter how it arose, and at the same time disbelieve in his existence: he will find that no action will follow if ontological reference be denied to the idea." The kind of evidence required by reason for the belief in the objective existence of such a Mind can hardly be different in character from that which it accepts for belief in the objective existence of a human mind other than one's own. The belief in other human minds appears to depend upon two things. The first is rarely if ever mentioned in philosophical writing, but the experience may nevertheless be general: in our opinion certainly is found in most cases. This is that one mind does in certain (and most) circumstances act directly upon another: in other words, that there is, as it were, an immediate intuition more or less intense of the fact of the presence of another mind. In human circles this immediate effect of mind on mind is probably most evident between those in a relation of close personal affection. To quote and examine evidence for this is not here in place. In the religious experience there is, we maintain, the same type of experience of being in close relationship with another Mind. In this immediate knowledge of God as in the immediate knowledge of other human minds there is something mystical. In fact, in this the real mystical element of religion consists. Secondly,

if a man is asked to describe in intellectual terms why he believes in the existence of other human minds, he will usually reply by a form of argument by analogy. The same type of argument appears to be quite sufficient for the rational support of the religious belief in a Personal God. The difference is that the range of the analogy is wider. The analogy in the human instances is that as my conscious activity is the ground of my conduct so another conscious activity is the ground of another more or less defined conduct. So with the idea of God as a personal consciousness, an objective reality is believed to correspond as the ground of the predominant unity which reveals itself, in, through, or in a spite of, diversity, in the realm of what is called the material universe, in the development of morality, of beauty, of intelligence, and of religion. The conduct of human persons appears to be enacted in relation either of definite harmony with or of some opposition to this predominant unity.

The Theist may also claim that his position gives a basis for the objectivity implied in the judgments of the moral consciousness. For moral distinctions are not such that we recognise them according to our own wishes. They force themselves upon us, whether we accept and act on them or not. As the experiences of the senses these also are the starting point for thought to pass to a ground beyond them. The same may be said with reference to the distinctive feelings and apprehensions of religion : they come not simply at wish, and they suggest to thought some reality beyond. It is thought which aids us in passing to a reality other than the subjective states of our own minds. Men do not rest in simple religious feelings but pass to the affirmation of spiritual Being as their partial source and their goal. A Theism of a personalist type recognises the active nature of human life giving real scope for moral endeavour in contrast with " the thralldom of the static Absolute. "

The felt need of salvation and redemption as manifested

in the history of religions and so real in the life of the religious individual; the need of all men at one time or another for the feeling of love, sympathy and coöperation, – these needs are only adequately interpreted and satisfied with a genuinely theistic philosophy of life. It is not that Theism is true just because it provides satisfaction for these needs – that is the form of argument which we reject – but that its satisfaction of these needs in a manner that no other philosophy satisfies them is a distinct reason in its favour.

Again, if first it is admitted that there is no adequate ground for maintaining that the personal immortality of the soul is impossible (and surely there is none), then in the sense in which we have previously analysed the actual position in regard to this matter, the positive facts may be made a basis for hope if not for confirmed belief. It is worthy of notice that in history the belief in the personal immortality of the soul has gone together most frequently with the acceptance of Theism, while in forms of Absolutism there has always been considerable doubt concerning the permanence of the individual soul. We contend, therefore, that the justification of the belief in God, in the immortality of the soul, and in the reality of atonement is in each case strengthened by the ground for the other beliefs and further by the fact that these are expressions of needs continually making themselves felt in the human mind.

It is significant that religion not only does not wait for complete realisation or entire satisfaction on any particular side of life, but also that in most religious experience there is an attraction of a personal kind which transcends any particular side. “The intellect brings its ideal and the conscience brings its ideal and the affections their ideal and these are united into the thought of one perfect being – the ideal of ideals.” But the successful religions have been those which have associations with the historical, alleged or real. Even the highest product of thought, the concept of an ideal, has neither

the value nor the power of a personal object of devotion experienced in some personal manner. This is not a thesis to be proved : it is a fact to be noted. The strength of Christianity is founded largely on that fact. In the personality of Jesus with his supreme dignity and his singleness of heart, with his strength and his tenderness, with his righteous anger and his compassion, his humility, and above all his faith, millions have found not merely an "ideal of ideals" but more, a personal object of devotion. The ultimate justification for belief in Jesus is this personal appeal. Such also has been the method of Christian expansion. "Not by the lips but by the life are men influenced in their beliefs, and when reason calls in vain and arguments fall on deaf ears, the still small voice of a life lived in the full faith of another may charm like the lute of Orpheus, and compel an unwilling assent by a strong indefinable attraction not to be explained in words, outside the laws of philosophy, a something which is not apparent to the senses, and which is only manifest in its effects,"¹⁰ "Admiration for a type of character," says Dr. Ross, "is more communicable than a theological dogma,"¹¹ and surely this is also the central truth of Carlyle's *Heroes and Hero-Worship*. Nevertheless it is also sufficiently proved in experience that a man's character depends to no small extent upon the beliefs he holds.

Whatever may be said of other religions, to the Christian his religion gives satisfaction and for him at least is "final" in this: that the spirit of love and of confidence with which Jesus inspires men is the source at the same time of inward peace and of strenuous activity. The real justification of Christianity is no abstract rational justification of beliefs but the personal appeal of Jesus. Through the centuries men have felt this influence and we are coming to recognise that it must be appreciated as a historical and metaphysical fact. "You may become

10. Osler, W. *Science and Immortality*. 1906.

11. *Social Psychology*. New York 1908.

a Christian - most men do become Christians - from finding in the life and sayings and death of Jesus something which touches them, something which is a revelation of divine love to the human heart." In the Christian Church this appeal has assumed a social character, guarded by the development of a body of doctrines or beliefs and cultivated by the believer's participation in forms of common worship. If these forms of worship aid in the expansion of the devotion to Jesus and to the highest religious emotions and activity then it may be maintained that they also are related to human needs, and they also should be considered as part of the data for the attention of reason. It must be enquired what they involve as to the ultimate nature of existence; in what kind of world they may retain their meaning. The character of the satisfaction obtained by the human soul from religious rites and ceremonies has been neglected far too much, though in any creed which claims to be an adequate philosophy of life consideration of the fact of this satisfaction, and its particular character is demanded.

What impresses one most about the religious life as it manifests itself in history and in our own age is its wealth of content, its richness in ideas, in emotions, in endeavour. What the religious life demands is before all sincerity : In the present essay it is devotion to truth with which we have been most concerned. A personal loyalty to Jesus may go along with the sincerest and most whole-hearted devotion to truth. Whether the metaphysical doctrines concerning the nature of his person are justifiable, we do not here discuss. But with regard to these as to all beliefs men should trust reason. The main requirement of human life is faith in the achievement of our efforts in all good directions. At present imperfection appears to be a feature of all sides of our lives : we can no more claim perfect or complete systems on the intellectual side of life than perfection on the moral side. But the former is no more a ground for

any abatement in the endeavour of the intellect than the latter is for ceasing to strive for greater moral perfection. The claim made on behalf of reason will not be exaggerated when its present attainments are considered with reference to the ideal it sets before itself. This ideal gives an inspiration for increased activity in which much that is best in life consists. The more men give themselves up to sincere effort in the intellectual as in all spheres of life, they will require not only a living faith in the possibility of achievement, but also to remember the saying of Christ, "In patience ye shall win your souls".

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PERSONALITY AND ATONEMENT.

An Essay in the Philosophy of Religion.

By

ALBAN G. WIDGERY M. A.

*Professor of Philosophy and the Comparative
Study of Religions, Baroda.*

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No nobler feeling than this of admiration for one higher than himself dwells in the breast of man. It is to this hour, and at all hours, the vivifying influence in man's life. Religion, I find, stands on it. **Carlyle.**

Know for certain that thou must lead a dying life; and the more that a man dieth to himself, the more he beginneth to live to God. **'A Kemps.**

Spake we not of a communion of Saints, unseen yet not unreal, accompanying and brotherlike embracing thee, so thou be worthy? Their heroic sufferings rise up melodiously together to Heaven, out of all lands, and out of all times, as a second *Miserere*; their heroic actions also, as a boundless everlasting psalm of triumph. **Carlyle.**

INTRODUCTION.

The first impression which is obtained by many of those who take up the Comparative Study of Religions is that their similarities over-whelmingly predominate and that the differences are of little moment. As one is constantly being reminded in conversation and in print in India, this seems to be the usual result of any general acquaintance with the subject. Deeper study gives reason for holding that the differences are just as real, at least as important as, and sometimes more important than the similarities. Obviously some of these differences are good, some are bad, and others practically indifferent. But the acceptibility of a doctrine or practice, whether it will appear good or bad, depends very often on the manner in which it is explained. If in a comparative study there appears very keen opposition to particular doctrines by the advocates of some religions and just as earnest support by the adherents of another religion, there is reason to enquire whether a re-interpretation would aid in the recognition of the value which the doctrines or practices may contain. We are justified in believing at the outset that there is some ground for the opposition to as well as the advocacy of certain interpretations of doctrines and practices.

Perhaps the most fundamental differences between Christianity and other religions centre around the person of Jesus and the dogmas concerning Him. With regard to the person of Jesus I believe that enlightened non-Christian views and the liberal Christian conception tend to converge to a greater harmony. The position I adopt, as an advocate of liberal Christianity is stated in detail in "*Jesus in the 19th Century and After.*" An account of the enlightened non-Christian attitudes must be postponed. In the present publication I limit myself to the discussion of one fundamental conception, that of Atonement.

Amongst non-Christians there is considerable opposition to the doctrine of Atonement as usually explained. Also, it must be admitted that amongst Christians themselves the traditional accounts fail more and more to appeal and are seriously discussed by scholars. There are thus two questions which require answers. The first is whether this doctrine which has been and is so stoutly defended contains in it something of

value which is not found, or is inadequately expressed, or is neglected, by other religions. The second is whether this value might be stated in more modern terms, which while then more acceptable to the liberal Christian, will also make itself felt by the non-Christian.

Most religions seem to have some ideas or practices of value which the others more or less neglect or fail to recognise. For the richest religious life an effort must be made to incorporate all. The notion of Atonement, as interpreted in terms of personal experience, must, I am convinced, be eventually accorded an important place, in some form or other by liberal-minded thinkers of all the great living religions. Before taking up the main task of stating my own attempt at an interpretation of Atonement, it will be advantageous to consider some few passages on the subject from liberal non-Christian writers. The subject is related to the whole problem of sin and suffering, salvation and redemption, but a detailed account of this problem forms a chapter in a volume on "The Comparative Study of Religions" at present in preparation.

* * * *

Considering the manner in which the idea of Atonement has frequently been presented in mediaeval and in modern times, it is not astonishing that it has appeared not merely unethical, but even as opposed to the principles of morality. This, of course, depends ultimately upon what one is to understand by the moral, and it will be seen that, even in the interpretation here given of Atonement, the prevalent ethical theories as, for example, concerning justice, are not precisely adhered to. One will not be surprised to find adherents to the religion of Zoroaster, so conspicuously ethical as that religion is, expressing views which seem, at first sight, in opposition. Thus, Dr. M. N. Dhalla, a very liberal and enlightened Parsee priest, tells us in his scholarly work on "*Zoroastrian Theology*" (New York 1914. pp. 348-9.) that the Parsee reformers maintained that "Zoroastrianism... never stood for any kind of vicarious salvation, for the question of salvation or damnation rested on the individual's own deeds. 'As the man sows, so shall he reap,' is the immortal truth taught by Zoroaster. Merit, they contended, cannot be purchased at a price, and sin cannot be expiated by proxy". It is nevertheless quite clear that some form of Atonement is recognised in the literature of the Parsees. The repentance of sins in prayer, and the atonement of sins especially in one's life time here is encouraged. Also it is described as an inner experience. "The soul becomes pure only when the atonement is heartfelt (*Dinkard vol I. p. 9*) and is accompanied by a firm resolve on

the part of the individual to redeem his past deeds in the present and the future " (Dr. Dhalla, *ERE. vol. V. p. 665*). But the account which Dr. Dhalla gives is somewhat narrow, for it says nothing of the influences which may and do lead men to repentance and regeneration; and further, it makes no reference to the Saoshyants (or sometimes particularly the Saoshyant) who will lead to final victory of the good. The idea certainly is that through their efforts an advantage will be obtained which others will share. Although one may give up the belief in any actual appearance of such special beings of the seed of Zoroaster, etc., the notion of the atoning work of particular individuals ought to be preserved. This side of Zoroastrian Theology deserves consideration, and the conflict of good with evil and the enjoyment of the good and the suffering of the evil given a social and not merely individualistic expression.

Passing to another definitely ethical religion, that of Judaism, we find a very staunch advocate of liberal Judaism, Mr. C. G. Montefiore, saying : " No mediation or mediator, no intercession or intercessor, are recognised by us in the dealings and relations of the individual with his God. Not the merits or labours or death of Jesus, but the love of God for man and the aspiration of man to God : these are the adequate causes for the highest and purest communion, the fullest atonement. " (*The Place of Judaism in the Religions of the World. London 1916 p. 20.*) Mr. N. S. Joseph expresses himself even more forcibly : " And what becomes of the dignity of man, if the Christian doctrine of the Atonement is to be believed ? What becomes of his individual responsibility - the main spur to human exertion ? Why should man be virtuous ? Why should he, conscious of his defects, strive to improve, conquer his passions, battle with temptation, do his best for his fellowmen - in a word, live a saintly life - if, notwithstanding his saintliness he cannot win the approbation of God and His saving grace except by the merits and mediation of another, except by the blood of Jesus of a means of salvation ? Does not the acceptance of such a theory of salvation appear as something irrational ? Truly, we all - even the best of us men - need the Mercy of God, but that Mercy being Infinite is all-sufficient without extraneous mediation. Are we to forget the Divine declaration ' I even I am the Lord, and besides me there is no saviour ' Isaiah xliii. 11. " (*Why I am not a Christian. London 1908. p. 14.*)

The latter writer appears in the first part of this passage to have forgotten completely that for every form of Christian interpretation, orthodox and liberal, the experience of Atonement can only come to those who know *metanoia* or change of mind. Both writers fail to recognise here that, though Divine Mercy be infinite, our experience

and the course of human development generally suggest that God sends diverse goods of life through diverse channels. The orthodox Jew believes that God revealed the law through Moses; the liberal Jew, as Mr. Montefiore, accepts the notion of progressive revelation. The question, therefore, is ultimately as to the nature of the good, if any, which the Jew might admit that Jesus brought to mankind, and how far in his case and in that of other benefactors the efforts for mankind have meant suffering for themselves; and finally, what this implies as to the nature of Reality itself, and the way in which complete reconciliation, redemption, and harmony are to be attained. The Jewish notion of the Messiah, whether we trace it with Dr. Oesterley (*The Evolution of the Messianic Idea*, 1907) from the times of primitive myth; see it in an idealised form in the book of Isaiah; in the fervent hopes of Jews at the time of Jesus; or in the expositions of modern orthodox Jews, does insist on this, that men are to be blessed through the Messiah—however diversely the conception may be interpreted. The Twelfth Principle of Maimonides, accepted by orthodox Jews: "I firmly believe that the anointed will come and, although He tarries, I wait nevertheless every for His coming," is explained by Mr. Friedlander (*Textbook of the Jewish Religion*, 9th ed. London 1914 pp. 48-9) thus "A descendant of the house of David, a human being and not more of Divine descent than any other man, will then be anointed to be at the head of our nation, and a source of peace and happiness to mankind." In fact it was largely on account of the fervent belief of the Jews at the time of Jesus that a saving Messiah would come that the Messianic doctrine of Christianity was able to spring up and grow. Although the manner in which traditional Christianity has presented the doctrine, has aroused opposition, the truths which are involved in it should not be rejected.

Amongst modern Muslims the idea of Atonement as it is usually conceived to be taught by Christians meets with considerable opposition. Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, a reformer in the Punjab, contended that "The doctrine of atonement as represented by the Christians is against the laws of Nature. In Nature we find that the sacrifice of the low for the high is the immutable law of God.....God has appointed the inferior to be sacrificed for the superior. But we do not find any instance in which a superior being is sacrificed for the sake of an inferior one. If the Christians had realised the significance of the laws of Nature they could not have fallen into the error of taking the crucifixion of Christ, who is held to be God, as the sacrifice of the high for the low." (*The Islamic Review*. vol. II. 1914. p. 154.) One may, at least in this small publication, leave on one side the question whether for God there is this distinction of superior and inferior amongst

beings as such. It must, however, be contended that the fact of solidarity shows that the higher do suffer through self-sacrifice in the endeavour to raise the lower. For the interpretation of Atonement given later little more than this is required for this particular aspect of the problem, and there is no reason why Muslims may not grant it. In a recent statement by a Muslim missionary in the West so much is clearly admitted : " Jesus was not God; but he became a son of God through self-sacrifice. Buddha, Ramchandra, and Krishna did the same and were worshipped like Jesus. They made sacrifices not for ATONEMENT but for AT-ONE-MENT with God. Muhammad....surpassed all others in this self-sacrificing spirit.....Jesus was a son of God, and so are you sons of God. Bear your cross like him and share with him the glory he enjoys through self-renunciation." (*The Islamic Review*. Vol. IV. 1916. p. 536.)

It is worth while mentioning here the belief in redemption held by many orthodox Muslims. According to this Mahomet on the day of resurrection will ask of God permission to intercede with Him for mankind, and will obtain it. Having pleaded with God, he will declare finally that none remain in hell but those who associated others with God. (see *Bokhari and Muslim, Chapter on Redemption*, also *Ibn Hazim*, vol. IV. 63-5.) This doctrine of redemption was rejected by the Mutazilites and the Kharijites. Seeing that it has a special reference to " the day of the resurrection ", it concerns us little here. Also, like some of the traditional accounts of the mode of operation of the death of Jesus in relation to human salvation, it is far too mechanical, and lacks immediate personal appeal and spiritual influence. A modern Muslim thinker like Syed Amcer Ali makes no mention of it in his "*Spirit of Islam*".

The outlook of Buddhism differs very much from the definitely theistic religions so far discussed. Nevertheless it is not without some points for consideration in the present connection. It is, perhaps, in the teaching of Mahayanism, the form most prevalent in China and Japan, that the nearest Buddhist conceptions to that of Atonement are met with. " The Bodhisattvas " writes Mr. D. T. Suzuki (*Outlines of Mahayana Buddhism*. London 1907. p. 293.) quoting a Buddhist work translated into Chinese in the 10th century A D. " filled with pity and love desire to suffer themselves for the sake of those miserable beings." "Therefore, all Bodhisattvas, in order to emancipate sentient beings from misery, are inspired with great spiritual energy and mingle themselves in the filth of birth and death. Though thus they make themselves subject to the laws of birth and death, their hearts are free from sin and attachments. They are like unto those immaculate, undefiled lotus flowers which grow out of mire, yet are not con-

taminated by it. Their great hearts of sympathy which constitute the essence of their being never leave suffering creatures behind (in their journey towards enlightenment). Their spiritual insight is in the emptiness (*cunyata*) of things, but (their work of salvation) is never outside the world of sins and sufferings." It will also be remembered how Gautama resisted the temptations of Mara and resolved to carry the message of enlightenment to others. This aspect of service is brought out in a " Buddhist Catechism " issued in 1881 for use in Buddhist schools, quoted by Dr. Copleston: " Q. Do Buddhists consider Buddha as one who by his own virtue can save us from the consequence of our individual sins ? A. Not at all. No man can be saved by another, he must save himself. Q. What then was Buddha to us and to other beings ? A. An all-seeing, all-wise, counsellor ; one who discovered the safe path and pointed it out, one who showed the cause of and the only cure for human suffering. In pointing to the road, in showing us how to escape danger, he became our guide. And as one leading a blind man across a narrow bridge over a swift and deep stream saves his life, so in showing us (who were blind from ignorance) the way of salvation, Buddha may be called our ' Saviour ' (*Buddhism Primitive and Present in Magadha and Ceylon*, 2nd 1908 p. 281.) The only comment which I would like to make here is that too little attention is given to factors which are not intellectual. There is the same kind of omission of feeling and will which one sees in the Socratic dictum " Virtue is knowledge," an omission which Plato and still more Aristotle strove to remedy. For, great as is the importance of knowledge of the " way," it is more often by an appeal to the feelings that the necessary resolution of will is achieved.

Vast as is the range of the various forms of Hinduism, it cannot be said to have clearly grasped the truth of the idea and the reality of the experience of Atonement as here described. In the theory of avatars or incarnations of higher beings and the work they do, there is a suggestion of a similar principle. It is, however, open to question whether the kind of influence felt in this connection is generally conceived in the personal manner insisted upon in the following essay. Rather it would seem that in most instances too great an emphasis is placed on intellectual apprehension compared with other sides of personality. The popular way of interpreting the doctrine of karma, that the form of a person's life depends solely on the results of his own " actions " is more or less opposed to the idea. For logically no ground remains for real service from or to others. Such a position is scarcely in harmony with, for example, the practice and interpretation of the S'raddha ceremony, by which the departed soul is supposed to be in some way affected. In view of the singularistic account of Reality, so often adopted by

Hindus, this inconsistency will cause no great trouble, since for such an account everything seems as true as it is false and as false as it is true.

I have not met with a Hindu discussion of the subject of my essay, but in one passage of "*The Heart of the Bhagavad Gita*" (1917 p.) by the present enlightened occupant of Karvir Pith, Dr. Lingesha Mahabhagavat, there is a suggestion of some discussion of the matter. "The company of the pious, the reading of books, and the hearing of sermons, may quicken the birth of spiritual yearning in our heart, but the growth of spirituality entirely depends on the individual. A theological objection is sometimes raised against this position, by saying that it precludes the Divine Mercy. But the objectors forget that if God's Mercy be unconditional it makes the Most Supreme Being partial. Why should not His Grace descend to the saint and the sinner alike? The idea of Divine Mercy should not be so degraded as to lay the axe at the very root of righteousness. God's Mercy depends entirely on the moral perfection of the soul; for, He has no blood-money. So, even to vindicate God's Mercy we have to admit individual liberty, for Heaven helps those who help themselves." The truth underlying this passage is of the utmost importance, though I should state it differently. But I fail entirely to see how the author reconciles it with his adherence to the singularistic philosophy expounded by S'ankaracharya. Any arguments he puts forward for his position will logically be equally applicable to the contradictory view. As I have previously pointed out, it has always been the teaching of Christianity, that repentance, a proper attitude of mind, is required. Thus I should say that God's Mercy is shown to all alike, but each can enjoy that Mercy only so far as each turns himself in the right spirit to God. His Vedantism apart, this I believe is essentially what the Swami means.

The nature of the views on Atonement must depend on the conception of what we are to be saved from. For the Jain salvation is the attainment of pure spirituality free from all contamination with unconscious matter. The way of salvation is first through knowledge. "All that can be done by another is the calling attention to the power and forces lying hidden and latent in the soul" (Mr. Champat Rai Jain : *The Key of Knowledge*. Arrah 1915. p. 470). Or again : "..... Reason, if rightly employed, is alone capable of re-establishing the state of at-one-ment between man and God, by establishing the illusory nature of the universe and the reality of life." I have already commented on the lack of adequate attention to factors other than knowledge in Buddhism : the same applies here. In the conception of the Tirthankaras, however, the Jains do admit that others may aid in Atonement. "He who wishes to avoid the pains of births and deaths in the world and the torments of hell, after death, must turn to the only true source and sit at the feet of the true teachers, the Tirthankaras". (885 note).

The Jains also insist on the importance of forgiveness. Mrs. Stevenson (*The Indian Philosophical Review*. Vol. I. Jan. 1918) says she has observed no more impressive Indian rite than that when at the end of the Jaina year the Jains seek and show forgiveness. Turning to a criticism of the Christian doctrine of Atonement, Mr. Champat Rai Jain, in the exhaustive treatise already quoted, says : " As the idea of the punishment of the innocent is foreign to our notions of dignity, the justice and the mercy of God, so is the idea of vicarious punishment of Christ for the sin of mankind a pure dogma of ignorant faith " (p. 470) The author *may* have obtained such a conception from some of the traditional and less enlightened representations of the doctrine, but I must confess never to have come across this idea of " the punishment " of Christ for the innocent. I have heard of Christ *voluntarily suffering* for others, and I believe, the innocent often do so ; that in fact Reality is such as to involve this. It appears to me a pure assumption to suppose that all of a man's suffering is due solely to his own sin, or even that sin and suffering are always connected one with the other. Unless this assumption is given up, it does not seem possible to recognise the importance of vicarious suffering.

* * * *

Passing now to Christianity, and the nature of this Essay, which was written soon after I had finished collaborating with Dr. Weinel in the production of "*Jesus in the 19th Century and After*." Though the Essay is a whole in itself, the position it advocates will I venture to believe be best judged, and perhaps only fairly judged by those who have studied that book. What we wished to do there was to give the results of critical research concerning the person and teaching of Jesus, as these results appeared to us. Taking the picture thus obtained as a standard, we surveyed the non-ecclesiastical western views of the nineteenth century and after concerning Jesus, particularly in relation to the moral and religious problems of the times. In the former of these investigations we found ourselves opposed both to those who denied the historicity of Jesus, and to the orthodox defenders who appeared to us to pay inadequate attention to historical criticism and to reiterate certain metaphysical doctrines concerning Jesus which deflected the judgment of mankind from his true worth and real religious significance.

Both Dr. Weinell and I definitely and deliberately avoided discussion of certain Christian dogmas such as those of Incarnation, Resurrection. The Trinity, and Atonement. Though I dissented then, as I do now, from the traditional interpretation of these dogmas, I was and am still of the conviction that religious ideas do not originate and persist without some reason. The task pressed itself upon me to state the manner in which these doctrines might be accepted by one who adopted the attitude to religion and to the place of Jesus in it, for the advocacy of which I am responsible in my part of the above-mentioned book. To fulfil this task I had hoped to publish a volume giving an exhaustive treatment, but the many new calls on my time and energy force me to abandon the project, at least till some distant future. I have discussed other aspects of Atonement in an article entitled "Needs" (*ERE. vol. IX.*) and in a contribution to the *Hibbert Journal* (October 1915) I have expressed as concisely as possible my reflections on the doctrine of Resurrection.

When this Essay was first written it was read through by Dr. Hastings Rashdall, and I have to thank him for this interest on this and many other occasions. Though I received from him a letter containing valuable suggestions and questions relative to its elaboration, I have unfortunately not found the time necessary for such elaboration. Except for a few slight modifications, the Essay remains in its original form.

Dr. Rashdall raised the question of the origin of the doctrine in its different forms. Questions of origin, especially when studied from the point of view of psychology, are of great importance ; but they are certainly secondary. The question is beyond the limits of my present purpose, but a few general remarks are perhaps necessary. I do not believe that Jesus taught the doctrine in its traditional forms : though I should think he knew of the influence which is regarded as central in the following account of Atonement, and even gave expression to that knowledge in his teaching : "Come unto me all yet that labour and are heavy laden ; and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me ; for I am meek and lowly in heart ; and yet shall find rest unto your souls " He was the source of the personal influence which was one cause, and among the earliest Christians the chief cause of the formulation of the doctrine. For the different forms of interpretation of Atonement there were many other causes which will probably be more clearly seen after more detailed comparative study of the religious movements and ideas in the Eastern mediterranean at the time of and a few centuries after Jesus.

The association of Atonement with the idea of a saviour who rises from the dead, and the idea of a divine sacrifice with that of a sacramental meal—as the sacrifice of Jesus is associated with the Eucharist—is at least suggestive to those making a comparative study of Religions. This is so even with the early non-Pauline presentations of the conception ; it is much more so in the theology of Paul which has such close affinities with Neo-Platonism and with the gnostic and theosophical currents of his times ; and in the theology of the middle Ages which had assimilated so much of the Roman spirit.

The conception of “the dying God.” for example, was widespread in ancient times. Dr. Gilbert Murray (*Four Stages of Greek Religion* 1910. p. p. 46-7.) tells of a vegetations spirit “in Greece in the first stage living, then dying with each year, then thirdly rising again, and raising the whole dead with him—in the third phase being called by the Greeks “The Third One or the Saviour.” This salvation, so thinks Dr. Murray, extended to guilt and sin “The more emotional cults of antiquity,” he says, “vibrate with the worship of the dying saviour, the Sosispolis, the Soter, who in so many forms dies with his world or for his world, and rises again as the world rises triumphant through suffering over death and the broken tabu.” The little studied religion of Mithraism, which spread over much of the Roman Empire and keenly opposed Christianity, contained the notion of a mediator. “Mithra was the mediator between the unapproachable unknowable God, that reigned in the etherial spheres and the human race that struggled and suffered here below.” And Dr. Cumont continues “Shamash had already enjoyed analogous functions in Babylon.” (*The Mysteries of Mithra*. 1898. p. 128. cf pp. 143 and 145). It is almost impossible not to believe that the spirit of Roman Law has coloured the Mediaeval conceptions of Atonement as a form of transaction involving God, Jesus as human, man, and the devil. What precisely was taken over from Roman ideas with the terms “sacrifice,” cannot be discussed here. (see W. Warde Fowler *The Religious Experience of the Roman People* 1911.) But, whatever the influence at work, the reality of the Christian experience then as now, is inexplicable without the supreme cause—Jesus.

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The question may be asked why this dissertation is called an Essay in the Philosophy of Religion. The question is an important one. The reason lies in the conception of the Philosophy of Religion to which

I think we are being led by the trend both of the study of religions and by the study of philosophy generally. According to this the Philosophy of Religion has to begin by an examination of the empirical data of religion as stated by the Psychology of Religion, the History of Religions, and their Comparative Study, and it has to lead on by a constructive interpretation to the most justifiable and comprehensive view of Religion that appears open to the seeker. Part of the empirical data are doctrines and ideas. The present Essay is thus a part of the Philosophy of Religion as I understand it, in being an attempt at a constructive interpretation of one of these ideas, that of Atonement, especially as related to the empirical religion of Christianity.

It remains only to avow my constructive purpose. I am little concerned with negative criticism : all I ask is that the reader will seek something positive in these pages. I may be wrong, lamentably wrong, but I fervently believe that the attitude of repentance and forgiveness, forgiveness and repentance, brought about through personal influence, as here emphasised is the only way to peace and prosperity amongst nations as amongst individuals. If I am right then the perpetrators of the present barbarities and all preachers of militarism are wrong, lamentably wrong.

PERSONALITY AND ATONEMENT.

The study of religion is about to enter upon a new stage; a stage in which attention will be occupied not so much with the systems of the past as with individual religious conceptions and their relation to personal experience. In the evolution of every science there is a time when it becomes an absolute necessity for advance that its terms be used with a definite connotation. If the progress of the physical sciences depends on the satisfaction of this demand, the advance of those which treat of mental and moral phenomena does so to quite an equal degree. Nowhere is the demand for definiteness more imperative today than in Theology. The requirement is not due simply to the desire for clarity in the realm of thought, but is the outcome of the conviction of the intimate connection between ideas and practical life. For Theology is concerned with the principles of religion, the innermost life from which all noble and worthy conduct springs. Though there may be an inexplicable ultimate in every attempt to give an account of Reality, religious and philosophical creeds are accepted because they give expression to the "soul of things" and render life more intelligible than it would otherwise be. But reason is ever faced with the task of seeking a more adequate understanding of the nature of experience. In determining the connotation of theological terms, appeal must, therefore, be made to personal religious experience; it is not sufficient simply to restate the theological systems of the past.

Though in no branch of research can much importance be attached to the etymological meaning of words, since language has evolved in intimate connection with thought and practical life such meaning may be suggestive at the outset of discussion. Atonement or at-one-ment implies reconciliation, the harmonising, the bringing into unison or unity, factors which previously were in some way opposed.

The term *Reconciliation* is often employed in a very general sense. Almost universally students of religion have recognised that the moral and the religious life have a definite relation to a felt discord in human experience. Moral endeavour is the striving to change a present state in accordance with a *conceived* ideal: it is the effort to realise values not yet for us existent as *felt* and *perceived*. This realisation of values, thought of as the transcendence of the opposition between the (previously) actual and the ideal can be spoken of as reconciliation only in the most general sense. For in the achievement the ultimate distinction between the two disappears: we have a "realised ideal", and "ideal real". Again, religion is sometimes said to be the experience of a harmony in which evil, though real, is felt not to be merely evil; or, expressed differently, religion is the experience that discord is not the ultimate truth of things. The attainment of Nirvana would thus be reconciliation, a way out of the discord of existence. But in that also, at least one of the factors disappears – the so-called finite individual – and the term reconciliation can only be applied to it indefinitely. The expression has a much more concrete and specific significance and this must be investigated and formulated in intelligible language.

The only profitable starting point for this purpose is the critical examination of actual cases of reconciliation in everyday life. These always refer to relations between persons, between conscious willing agents. Analysis of such

cases reveals (a) at least two spiritual beings, (b) a discord between them (c) a healing of the discord so that harmony is felt. In speaking thus of " distinct spiritual beings " there is no need to raise the question of metaphysical separateness : all that is implied is persons with their own feelings, ideas, and activities, as known in naive experience. Similarly, by " discord " is meant divergence in feeling and idea, leading usually to active opposition calling forth moral disapproval. In a world which is in any real sense a unity, persons as active spiritual beings, must be in a relation of opposition or of co-operation. And where there is opposition there is need of reconciliation.

Harmony between persons implicates feeling, idea, and activity. Reconciliation is the achievement and recognition by each person concerned of an essential unity, that is, consistency (not identity) of idea, feeling and activity, where previously it was at least lacking. Some knowledge of the nature of the " other " and of the world in which we are to co-operate in order to realise our ideals is indispensable: the fuller the knowledge - given the right attitude of will - the closer the harmony and the more comprehensive the common life in the relationship. The necessity of a right attitude of will indicates the ethical character of reconciliation. Community of feeling exists not only in the common enthusiasm for the values to be achieved, but more especially in the mutual participation in the joy of unity one with another. The total experience is nevertheless something more than the aspects which appear to reflective introspection; it is more than intellectual and moral effort and similarity of emotion: in its fulness it is an ultimate concrete relationship of person with person.

The essential character of reconciliation in ordinary life is thus just " personal discord healed ". Persons who have wronged one another may continue in the same malevolent attitude, and as long as this endures there is no

atonement. But their attitude may change and such change may best be described as *metanoia*, repentance. Without repentance there is no real reconciliation. From the point of view of the person wronged, forgiveness also is involved. Forgiveness is the resolution on the part of the person wronged not to consider the evil further in such a way as to interfere with the establishment of harmony with the wrongdoer. There may be repentance without forgiveness, and forgiveness without repentance: in neither case can atonement be complete. Reconciliation may therefore be described as the establishment of harmony between persons previously in a state of discord, and this necessitates repentance and forgiveness.

If the social aspects of human development are kept in view it will be seen that this personal conception sheds light upon problems of *moral and spiritual regeneration and redemption from suffering* which have previously been considered only from the point of view of magic and mystical absolution. The reality of regeneration cannot be denied: it is found even in the physical world studied by biologists. To deny the possibility of breaking off habits and of developing new ones in a different direction is equivalent to denying everything fundamental in the spiritual interpretation of human personality. On the other hand to admit the actuality of such regeneration is implicitly to accept this spiritual conception, whether that acceptance is consciously recognised or not. And, indeed, the fact of moral and spiritual "re-birth" is sufficiently common not to allow of being reasonably disputed. Physical, intellectual and moral habits are broken off: we can and do change the nature of our lives; we can and do recover what we have previously lost. There is no adequate ground for the assertion that so far as character is concerned the effects of the past may not be *entirely* retrieved. For this, however, repentance, change of mind, an active resolution on the part of the mind itself, is fundamental.

Experience shows irrefutably that the greatest power leading to such change and regeneration is that exerted by one person upon another. Only in part can this influence be described as the example of a good life or as the inspiration towards higher ideals: taken as a whole it resists theoretical formulation. Like the ultimate nature of the individuals concerned, so this relation between them, though real for experience, transcends all thought which has found adequate expression in language. Personal influence does more than all the creeds, for, through the feeling of harmony and love it leads men to adopt the "type of life" of those who are the principle agents in bringing them into that relationship, and it arouses them to enthusiastic co-operation for the realisation of sublimer ideals. Though usually strongest in actual acquaintance, this power is also effective through literature and every form of art and social organisation which is a means of transmission of the "personal." The influence of a distinctive personality may make itself felt through a historical society, and so aid in the spiritual regeneration of those with whom he never came into actual contact.

The problem of *redemption from suffering* appears to have no connection with the above personal conception of Atonement: for suffering does not necessarily involve a discord between persons. It might, therefore, be better to treat redemption alone and not include it in Atonement. But that would be contrary to established usage, and further, it is in personal relationship and influence that the most effective redemption is found. Distinction might be made between suffering caused by sin and ignorance, and that not so caused. The former will come to some extent under the conceptions of reconciliation and regeneration which have been already discussed, for it may be lessened and possibly entirely eradicated by moral and intellectual progress which is based upon personal relationship. Yet, as in the meantime such

suffering, like that not so caused, must be borne, the question of redemption is the same as before. The problem of suffering includes that of the whole animal world, but of necessity attention must here be limited to human beings. It is a fact that suffering is easiest to be borne and has its best effects upon character when the sufferer feels that others stand to him in a relation of active serving love. Such love is not the enfeebling sympathy taught by so many Christians, accepted as the essence of Christianity by Schopenhauer and Wagner, and scornfully rejected by Nietzsche: it is not the bemoaning of the pain of another, but a community of life which raises the sufferer above an egoistic concern with his own suffering.

Two or three facts of the greatest importance for the present investigation are generally overlooked owing to the frequency of their occurrence. Often a person who has wronged another feels too unworthy to make the approach towards reconciliation which he wishes to make and feels that he ought to make. Reconciliation is then achieved only if the one wronged definitely takes the first step. Persons are not infrequently drawn much more closely together by the breaking out and the healing of a discord, and those not conscious of harmony of feeling and purpose are brought into active co-operation through the emergence of a definite dispute and the attainment of a proper understanding. Perhaps nothing draws men together more than suffering. If sin, ignorance, and suffering lead men finally to closer harmony and deeper love they are certainly not merely evil.

II

In the minds of those addicted to a vague language of mystery the very simplicity of the above facts will form a chief ground of rejection of the account of Atonement here proposed. Nevertheless, from these facts alone does it seem possible to render intelligible the theological conception of Atonement, and only in the light of these facts can the part Jesus takes in human atonement be properly understood. Other interpretations obscure the truth of this personal one and lead to positive evil as teaching non-moral or even immoral conceptions of salvation.

A genuinely Christian Theism, as distinguished from many of the ancient and the modern systems of Idealism, regards God as personal in relation to men as persons "made in His image." God is like man, because man is like God. The relation of God to man, is that of being to Being, not simply of Being to Itself, as is the real implication of Absolutism. The authority or objectivity of the moral judgment has its basis in the reality, the actuality, of the moral ideal in the Divine nature. Divergence from the moral ideal on the part of man is a discord between him and God; for there should be harmony between the ideas, feelings, and activity of man and the Divine purpose for man, and the Divine attitude towards him. Perfect harmony will be attained only when all the personal beings know and follow the ideal and feel the bliss of the community of life with Him. Opposition and deficiency necessitate reconciliation. For this, intellectual effort is required; it is impossible to enter into an effective relationship with an "Unknown" or an "Unknowable". Some knowledge of the Other is essential. Moral endeavour is equally fundamental, as is repentance or *metanoia*. Similarly forgiveness, here from God, is vital for Atonement. As Divine forgiveness is felt in the religious experience to be a fact; so at the same time the communion with God is known as that of

reality with Reality. As personality transcends all intellectual analysis (which occurs within it) , so the ultimate nature of the relation of man with man and of men with God defies statement in terms of mere thought or of the moral consciousness.

The experience of communion with the Divine is the unique essence of religion as distinct from the moral attitude and the theoretical beliefs inseparably associated with it. Religion is much more present in everyday social activities than prevailing theories of it admit. For the realisation of harmony amongst human beings has a satisfaction which is more than mere moral approbation : the inability adequately to describe the experience is no valid reason for refusing to recognise it as a fact. In so far as the harmony of men is part of the Divine purpose and is a relation of realities, this experience, wherever it is felt, is one with the fundamental experience which is the essence of religion. Every attainment of harmony, every reconciliation between man and man, is part of the process of universal Atonement, has, that is, a religious character.

Personal communion as the substance of religion, and repentance and forgiveness as the means by which mankind enters into this communion, finds expression in various religious rites and ceremonies. In the genuine idea of sacrament there is the conception of participation in a " common meal " with the Divine Being. Peace-offerings suggest the attempt to heal the breach between the worshipper and God: the suppliant feels that he is out of harmony with God and that he is responsible. The ceremony of the scape-goat reveals the same desire to overcome a discord. All these practices, untill they become merely formal, presuppose actual repentance, a desire for communion with the Divine, and a faith in the reality of Divine forgiveness. Not the external act but the change of mind was the efficacious part of the proceeding. Yet in view of the level of intelligence of the people at some

times of such ceremonies, and the solemnity of the ritual act, it is not surprising that the scapegoat was often regarded magically as the efficacious factor in reconciliation. Unfortunately many have looked upon Jesus as accomplishing the atonement of mankind in a somewhat similar manner by "bearing our sins". The rejection of such a conception as wholly unjustifiable does not involve the denial of a unique significance of Jesus for human salvation.

III.

The extant evidence leaves no justification for doubt that Jesus existed as man, and a sufficiently clear impression of His character and teaching can be obtained.* The most authenticated fact concerning Him is that He drew to Himself not merely religious minds not entrenched in ecclesiastical formalism, but also, and perhaps more especially, those in a state of moral disease, alienated from God and their fellow men. In the experience of every day it is personal appeal, the contagion of a more sublime and noble character which raises men : such was the influence of Jesus upon His disciples. In communion with Him they gained confidence and the power to lead a life more in harmony with His. Of the numerous examples of this influence, that exerted on the Magdalene is the most striking : not to be equalled in any other literature. Different from the priestly perpetuators of an ecclesiastical system, and from the prophetic preachers of righteousness, Jesus was the perfection of the saint. The titles which were so soon bestowed upon Him are at least a proof of the power of His influence.

* Vide "Jesus in the 19th Century and After"; pp. 112 ff. 145 ff.

Much of what is told us of Jesus is eschatalogical in tone, but that was not the life-giving in Him, and that was not what has produced the change in humanity which His advent caused. The fundamental in Him was His trust in God and the harmony of His will with divine purpose as it appeared to Him in His inmost nature. Divine Fatherhood and human sonship was not for Him mere belief, but the vital principle to be acted on in all conduct. By the religious character of His genius He led others to the same attitude: associated with him, they came to feel more intimately the relation to the Father. In realising as none other the personal communion with God He entered into such an intimacy with His brethren that He is the most powerful factor in real Atonement: the most powerful because His authority is the most personal. The conception of the Kingdom of God, not a simple eschatalogical phantasy for Him, is ultimately the expression of this fundamental community of life of the whole universe of spiritual beings. Life and teaching, personality and principle are in Him inseparable, in their implication and effect.

Again and again the parables represent the ideal of a personal harmony of man with man and of men with God. Those who were drawn to Jesus felt the need of repentance and forgiveness, and by much in His teaching these are shown to be necessary. Towards sinners the attitude of Jesus was one of encouragement to higher things, not one of condemnation: towards sufferers it was one of acts of service and deep faith. Not limiting His view to the merely human, He was raised above consideration of His own life to participation in the purpose of the whole, the will of God. In face of the sufferings of others, in face of His own sufferings even that of the apparent failure of His cause, even in His momentary doubt on the Cross, He revealed personal trust in God as the only redemption, the only basis of real optimism.

Nothing spreads so quickly and establishes itself so securely as deeply rooted conviction and feeling. From that of Jesus in actual contact with His disciples sprang up the Christian Church, the vital character of which, then as now, is the transmission by social intercourse of not merely a doctrine but a life. The Church is a continuation of the life of Jesus in the work of Atonement. Its external organisation has its justification only as a practical aid to this end. It is quite subordinate to the spiritual unity of purpose and community of joy of its members. No conception of the Church can give it a more worthy significance than this.

IV.

The preceding treatment has been more particularly from the point of view of individuals. Yet, notwithstanding many strong currents of Individualism, the main course of life during the nineteenth century and since has impressed men more forcibly than ever before with the *solidarity* of the human race and its relation to the world of Nature. By solidarity is meant the dependence of all individuals one upon another, so that none are quite free from the effects of all the acts of others. The society is the whole, the unit, even though its constituent factors – persons – have a far greater independence and intrinsic worth than the components of any other whole which is known to us. The significance and value of the life of the individual cannot be rightly estimated without consideration of his place in relation to the purpose of the whole.

One consequence of the solidarity of the race is that individuals are caused to suffer from actions not their own. Sin rarely if ever affects the wrong-doer alone. In the struggles which humanity makes to reach a higher level of life many are called upon to endure hardships and pain, not as a result of their own acts but through the methods used of necessity by those who more directly determine the development. Again, not a few whose main endeavour is to bring solid benefits to mankind sacrifice themselves to their cause. Suffering from the sins of others ; involuntary suffering through humanity's efforts upward ; and suffering deliberately accepted in order to achieve a self-chosen aim, are all experiences of daily life. The attainment of nearly every good depends upon effort which has in it an element of pain, of self-limitation, of self-denial. Healthy effort is undoubtedly in the main pleasurable, but that persistence in activity, which is usually required in order to realise any important value, is rarely without personal sacrifice. Even the minor accomplishments of the many show this. The sacrifice required from the earnest politician, the moralist or religious teacher, or from anyone with a wide sphere of activity is much greater. For, as the inspiration is here more intense, so also is the pain caused by the opposition or the apathy of the multitude. Lasting values have been attained only because such men have recognised their relationship to the rest of humanity and, true, to their convictions have striven at any cost to themselves to benefit mankind. In one sense - in the only one worth considering-it may be said that "by their stripes we are healed."

Suffering is an evil even though it may be seen to be incurred in the production of a good. Up to a certain level of moral and intellectual development the individual feels little pain which is not centred in himself, and this is mostly physical. But the more he is brought into conscious relation with others and shares their moral activities and knowledge, the more he feels pain from

causes which may be called “over-individual”. He becomes sensitive to the physical suffering of others; he is oppressed by the presence of so much discord among men; he sees the cause of much evil in ignorance and in remediable conditions of environment; worst of all he finds the majority apathetic, acquiescing in life as they find it, at a lower level than might be reached by the exertion of effort. The knowledge and experience of all these facts brings suffering: the vision of the ideal inspires to conflict against them, and in this conflict also pain is inevitable. But the end fought for, if attained, is worth the struggle, however severe, and they who embark on such a venture are imbued with faith in the realisation of good.

It is in this connection that there is some meaning in talking of “the suffering of God”. As previously it was necessary to insist on the solidarity of *humanity*, so now it is all important to recognise the solidarity of the *Universe* - God and the world. The relation of God to the world must be considered from two points of view similar to those from which we have surveyed human life. First, with regard to His “activity” and purpose in creation: the best His nature can create He produces at whatever cost in self sacrifice, self-limitation and suffering. This is not to say that, viewed temporarily the best is *already* created: rather it is even now in process of creation, so that the self limitation, the suffering, of God is a present reality. Secondly, God has knowledge of the evil and suffering in the world. The greater a man’s knowledge of men and the more moral he becomes the more conscious he is of sin and pain in the world. God must be fully conscious of these and must suffer on account of them. Suffering and sin are real evils for men and there is no justification for the supposition that they are not so for God. But, as the more religious a man is, the more he confidently thinks of sin and pain as stepping-stones to higher things, so God cannot be regarded as doubtful of the attainment of His

purpose. Through the solidarity of the Universe sin and suffering affect all; and as God is bound up with His world He also suffers in respect of it.

The fact of the solidarity of God and the world is the starting-point for the examination of the conception of "satisfaction" which found a place in many of the earlier views of Atonement. The problem arose from a supposed need of reconciliation between the demands of "Divine" Justice and Divine Love. Justice implies "to everyone according to his deserts": that the agent in the production of an evil or a good should himself suffer that evil or enjoy that good or its equivalent. In theories of substitution it has been thought that the demands of justice are satisfied if one who did not commit the wrong suffered the evil. But this is absolutely to contradict the very conception of justice which they were intended to save. That one who has done evil should escape the consequences is not just; but that one who is innocent should suffer them is positively unjust. Nevertheless, in the world as we know it the innocent do suffer for the guilty, and the guilty not infrequently escape from the greater part of the evil they cause.

The question is therefore forced upon us: "Can the conception of justice be regarded as a fundamental principle of the Universe?" Consider almost any human experience where the question of justice might be raised. If through the malevolent action of another one loses an eye, to demand that the assailant's eye be put out is revenge. It would be just that he should restore the one harmed to his original condition. The example is simple; but it is clear that even here restoration is humanly impossible. Even if it were possible, the sufferer would have had considerable pain and inconvenience which could not be eradicated. Apparently, therefore, in our world the conception of the "satisfaction" of justice cannot be actualised. Men suffer through the faults of others: God suffers through the faults of men. He is forming a world,

as we find it, not in accordance with the demands of justice but in which the innocent suffer so that a world better than one of justice may be realised – a Kingdom of Love. It is possible to speak of God’s suffering as a “satisfaction” for the sins of the world, only in so far as this constitution of the world necessitates His own suffering to fulfil His purpose with men. He does not deal with us according to our sins, nor reward us according to our iniquities.

The world is being created on a principle of love, not of justice, and only through love can the apparent violation of the principle of justice be regarded as not in itself an evil. Though its method of statement would have to be modified, there is much truth in the position of Hume that justice has its nature and basis in the support it gives to society in some of its forms.* A higher form of society may dispense altogether with the principle. Though it may be impossible to render again in every case what one has taken from another, it is always possible to turn from a malevolent attitude. In the light of the principle of love the very fact that a man cannot restore what he has taken, can never eradicate that evil, is to him who has repented a most powerful force drawing him to closer love and service to the one he has wronged. If a man could always give compensation with strict justice for the wrong he has done the last state would be no better than the first. But as that is not possible, the man who recognises his sin may be led to exert himself to do all the good he is able to the one previously wronged, and so a greater good may be attained than existed at first. Further, through love suffering can be borne. And, if the impossibility of satisfying strict justice leads to more love, that impossibility is a beneficial fact of the Universe. It means, however, that God also suffers; it is in part through this evil of suffering that He achieves His end. While there is sin in the world suffering from

* Hume. *An Enquiry concerning the Principles of Morals.* Section III.

that source continues : not until the final harmony is reached ; not until a realm of spiritual beings united in love has been realised, will the suffering of God for His creatures cease. God so loves the world that He “ gives Himself ” for it.

All this is from the point of view of time. Human sin and suffering still continue. It seems impossible to regard the suffering of God as summed up in the empirical suffering and death of a person in past human history. There is no justification for the view that it is so. Nevertheless, empirical historical experiences may contain truths intimately related to the metaphysical suffering of God. The Crucifixion of Jesus may make clear the truth that the good have to endure pain and hardships in order that the purpose of creation may be fulfilled; and the occasion of His suffering may have been the occasion of the manifestation of the sublimest love – the very purpose of creation itself. In the history of Christian thought so great an importance has been attached to the death of Jesus, especially in reference to Atonement, that no treatment of His place in human salvation can be regarded as complete without a careful consideration of that fact. But no interpretation of the religious significance of the death of Jesus can be accepted as valid, which does not accord with the actual historical circumstances as given in our records.

V.

The Synoptic Gospels undoubtedly give us the clearest account of the death of Jesus, but it is difficult to say how far later theological development has affected even these documents. Except amongst those who deny the historicity of Jesus there is no real dispute that Jesus suffered death by crucifixion. This mode of punishment

was inflicted by the Romans upon political rebels, and as in the cases of the two thieves, also upon some offenders against civil rights. Crucifixion was ignominious and painful. To the question why Jesus was put to death the only adequate answer is that there were different reasons in the minds of the different parties concerned in His accusation and execution. The inscription on the Cross " Jesus of Nazareth, King of the Jews " suggested at once the pretext with which the Roman authorities carried out the sentence. For the purpose of the moment hiding their real feelings against the Roman yoke, the people called out that they had no king but Caesar. The statement of Pilate that he could " find no fault in Him " probably meant that there was no consistent evidence to convict Jesus as a rebel against Roman rule. For personal reasons of his own he delivered Jesus over to the Jewish authorities, amongst whom the priestly faction may have tried to misrepresent Him as a political rebel on account of His claim to be the Messiah. But nothing in the life and teaching of Jesus justifies for one moment the view that he led or wished to lead a political revolt.

Pilate might have prevented the death, but His accusers, the real cause of His condemnation, were His opponents the priests. What was the reason of their hostility ? They were moved by two things. From their conception of the Messiahship they looked upon His claim to be the Messiah as blasphemous. They were 'very jealous' for the " Lord, their God". This belief that He was guilty of blasphemy was the chief cause of their opposition and hatred. Then, further, if we may judge from human nature as it is found at present, they may have felt some irritation at the contrast between their own teaching and lives on the one hand, and the preaching and conduct of Jesus on the other. For the letter of the law He had little sympathy : they sacrificed all freedom of the spirit to it. He opposed what they felt to be vital and along with this even represented Himself to be the long expected Messiah.

Which of these two motives was really predominant cannot now be decided with any certainty, but there can be little doubt that they both had a share in producing the enmity of the more zealous leaders of Judaism against Jesus.

The charge of blasphemy deserves closer consideration than it has yet received from Christian writers. No question in Christian Theology is more difficult than that which concerns the meaning of the title 'Son of God' as applied to Jesus in the New Testament. The attitude taken towards this problem must for long divide those who strive for a free spiritual interpretation of religion from those who continue to accept ecclesiastical tradition and formalism. The available data is not sufficient for a decisive answer to the question, the attitude towards which must therefore depend upon one's general view of Reality and Christianity. But from the religious standpoint our attitude towards the Jews must undergo a change. However mistaken they may have been, that they could not tolerate what they felt to be blasphemy ought to be held a mark of sincerity and religious conviction. The stoning of Stephen was apparently also on a charge of blasphemy as to the significance to be ascribed to Jesus. A more enlightened age would express its conviction otherwise and act differently.

The disciples dismayed at the arrest and crucifixion of Jesus, fled, possibly anticipating that as His associates they might be made to suffer with Him. If He had told them of His approaching end and of a return to them, they certainly did not immediately connect His actual death with His teaching and His life.

What Jesus Himself thought of His sentence and coming death is another of the most difficult questions in Christian Theology, and this is of especial importance for the wider problem of the significance of His death for atonement. Later theological development, even if it did not affect the narrative of the Synoptic Gospels, modified men's way of looking at it. Those who think of the life and death of Jesus as a deliberately planned "scheme

of salvation "represent Him as having a " Divine foreknowledge " of His death. Many theological writers of our day, even amongst those who insist most upon their orthodoxy, admit that Jesus' knowledge was limited. Neither in the empirical evidence, nor in the fundamental principles of Christian faith are there any adequate reasons for supposing that he had peculiar powers of foresight not open to human beings as such. A scientific Theology can hardly base a theory of the significance of the death of Jesus on the idea that He came with a definite intention known from the beginning of His mission, to give His life "to take away the sins of the world." As time went on He probably " foresaw " His destruction as the natural course which events would take, just as the prophets of earlier times had " foreseen " the victory or the overthrow of the people of Israel according to their religious fidelity or infidelity. He knew as clearly as any man ever knew that He had a mission, and His whole soul was devoted to it. Having met some success and some failure in the countryside, He turned His face steadfastly toward Jerusalem feeling that final success or immediate failure must come. From the beginning of His ministry He had known the opposition of the scribes and Pharisees, and on His entry into Jerusalem the antagonism of the priests must have shown itself at once with considerable force. Any hope He may have had of immediate external success soon left Him : He began to ponder over the almost inevitable end. A. Reville* says that if Jesus knew of His death and did not try to escape He was a suicide. But our sources give reason to believe that at an earlier time He had left Galilee probably to avoid Herod Antipas.† So again at Jerusalem He seems to have taken measures to prevent capture : He passed His nights outside the city ; in the day time the " people " may have afforded Him some protection (Mark

* A. Reville *Jesus de Nazareth* 1897.

† Dr. F. C. Burkitt " *The Gospel History and its Transmission* " 3rd. pp 89. 93-6.

xiv 2. cf, Luke xvii 6.). It was through betrayal by Judas that He was surprised and taken at night. Had it been possible He would not have died. The priests had already begun to wean the people from Him; after He was arrested the multitude became hostile towards him (Matt. xxvii. 24).

It appears, therefore, (1) that Jesus foresaw the great probability of death if He went on with His mission. He could interpret the nature of the antagonism shown towards Him, and He remembered the experience of the prophets who had preceded Him. (2) He resolved to go on with His mission : with the character He had and with His faith in God He could not give it up. (3) He tried, nevertheless, to ward off the blow. The prayer in Gethsemane - our report of which in the Synoptics must contain some historical truth - reveals the suffering He endured from the conditions in which He found Himself : the opposition of the priests who were supposed to have the cause of religion at heart; the rejection of His teaching; His apparently inevitable death. Only after a struggle within Himself was He able to go forward. Never had hopes risen higher; never had the thing hoped for been so sublime; never did failure seem so great. The earnestness of His prayer to be delivered from such an end was only surpassed by His willing submission and His readiness to die should God ordain it so. The absolute nature of this submission shows itself as the outstanding feature of His trial. Truly human, on the cross He uttered one cry of despair; He was dying; He knew it : for a moment His mission and His hope seemed in vain : " My God; My God; why hast thou forsaken me ? "

VI.

The question now to be considered is not whether the death of Jesus has or has not a significance for humanity, but as to the nature of its significance. For, since it occurred, men once they have come to know its true character, have never failed to be impressed and influenced by that death. There is no rigid measure for judging the relative importance of men, but humanity makes value-judgments on individuals and in the experience of ages consistently judges some to be of more importance to it than others. At no time have all the men then living had an opportunity of expressing a judgment upon any individual or number of individuals. Nevertheless large sections of mankind have through long periods of time accorded to certain men a unique position. And Jesus is one of these. Christians profess to place Him first and far above any other. The mere existence of such an attitude on the part of so large a portion of mankind is a fact of the very greatest importance for any modern estimation of His worth. Those who reject the judgment this large portion of mankind has made upon Jesus should consider why men have fallen into so great an 'error'. Those who accept the judgment should strive to make clear the basis upon which it rests and what He means for the moral and religious life of man. All who have admitted the special significance of Jesus have also held that His death has a great importance. Accepting this judgment, our task is to find in what that importance consists.

Some popular hymns and some forms of devotional prayer have led men to believe that the particular virtue of the suffering of Jesus lies in its intensity. Suffering is so common a factor in life that unless it reaches a certain intensity it can hardly arouse special attention. None would deny that death by crucifixion is painful : but is it not more painful to be burned at the stake or to be thrown

into boiling oil, to be starved or suffocated to death ? To such a question it will be replied that this is to think simply of the physical suffering, and it may be contended that the mental agony of Jesus, that is, the total pain from physical and from other causes was the greatest ever endured. The suffering of Jesus began when He first became aware of the needs of His fellow men. So it is sometimes suggested that in His bitter grief He suffered for " the sins of the whole world ". To establish or to refute the proposition of the excess of the bitterness of the suffering of Jesus over that of all others are alike impossible, and no sane Theology would try to make the significance of the death of Jesus depend upon such a proposition. What Dr. Forrest* means when he writes " the essential point is that His self-sacrifice led Him to undergo *a death none other could endure* " (italics ours) it is exceedingly difficult to say; but, so far as we understand it, we find no ground for and very little purpose in the statement.

Others beside Jesus have suffered death for their persistence in their convictions, so the question is suggested : Wherein lies the difference between the death of Jesus and the deaths of these other men ? One of the greatest errors of Theology in the past has been to make an almost absolute distinction between Jesus and the rest of mankind. Yet every effort to achieve reconciliation between men, and between men and God by the influence to regeneration from sin to a life more in harmony with the moral law; every effort to raise men above their suffering, whether it cost little or whether it cost a man his life, is a factor in the attainment of the good, is a force leading to Atonement. Thus far the sufferings and the deaths of others are similar to the suffering and death of Jesus and have a similar value for humanity: viewed so, Jesus may simply be believed to hold the supreme place.

Any marked difference between the significance of the death of Jesus and that of others who have sacrificed

* "The Christ of History and of Experience." 6th ed. 1908. p. 309.

themselves for progress must depend upon the relation of the death in each case to the associated life and teaching. In this connection it has been urged that the death of Jesus was that of an absolutely sinless being, and that therein lies its uniqueness and the greatness of its result. To this view there are two objections. Even if the assertion of sinlessness could be justified, the difference would only be one of degree and not of kind. For, the very fact of their self-sacrifice presupposes that the others were good in a very high degree. Fatal to the argument, however, is the fact that the assertion is an assumption. The attribute of sinlessness is negative, and to establish a negative is here impossible. If *we* "can find no fault in Him" on moral grounds, all that we are justified in affirming is just that fact. We do not know all He thought, said, and did : and He Himself is reported to have said : "Why callest thou me good? There is none good but one, God." (Mark x 18).^{*} Not the negative attribute of sinlessness but the positive reality of a good life, that is what is of fundamental importance to men seeking for guidance in the art of living, and for inspiration in their effort to realise the Kingdom of God. It is sufficient in this direction that His influence has been overwhelmingly greater and His teaching indescribably purer than those of any other.

* It must of course be admitted that logically the orthodox interpretation is not impossible, that is, that Jesus meant, "Why do you not therefore recognise me as God?" Whether He meant this would depend upon the manner in which He said the actual words attributed to Him, and concerning this we have no evidence. In any exhaustive treatment of this particular problem careful attention would be required to the frequent recent attempts to indicate occasions on which the acts or utterances of Jesus were not of the highest. Whatever be the reply to these attempts they cannot reasonably be overlooked by those who accept the orthodox view of sinlessness. With regard to the above paragraph Dr. Rashdall remarked

Distinction may be made between Christians and non-Christians who have died or suffered for a noble cause: the former were inspired by the spirit and example of Jesus, and a personal devotion to Him. The difference that has to be explained may therefore be sought in the ideals taught and lived by Christians and non-Christians respectively. The ideal of Jesus is distinctive. Non-Christian religions and ethical systems contain moral judgments similar to those found in His teaching and in Christian ethics generally. But it has never been shown that the same fundamental moral *attitude* affecting every aspect of life, has been taught and lived before or quite

that "it is important to note the absence of that consciousness of sin which has been so prominent a feature in the religious consciousness of those who have come nearest to Christ. Think for instance of the contrast with St. Francis." He rightly in my opinion, calls "the absence of any sense of alienation from God or need of positive forgiveness for actual sin" *remarkable*. The insistence on this fact constitutes an important part of the chapter on "The Uniqueness of Christ's Moral Self-consciousness" in Dr. Forrest's "*The Christ of History and of Experience*," which is assuredly one of the most noteworthy books in modern Christian Theology, which should be read by all Christian and non-Christian scholars. "The strenuous moral enthusiast," he says p. 30 (6th ed.) "or the aspiring saint tends in spite of himself to constant introspection. It is the accompaniment of his spiritual honesty. He may be quite aware that it has an unhealthy side, but a keen self-examination is his only preservative against a possible self-deception. This kind of self-criticism has no place in Jesus." Dr. Forrest also acutely maintains that there seems to have been no hesitation on the part of Jesus in his bestowal of approval or of rebuke, and no misgivings as to whether He had judged a person fairly or not. All these contentions are important, and I do not wish to be supposed to maintain that one *may not* go further than is indicated in the text. I am unable to go further, and I do not think we are justified in going further. And, as I have maintained elsewhere, sinlessness, if admitted gives no ground for the assertion of the orthodox conception of Divinity. With that I am not now concerned: Here I wish simply to maintain that the minimum statement is sufficient for the conception of Atonement presented. Nevertheless, the greater the moral perfection of Jesus the greater should be His moral influence.

independently of Jesus Himself. What He preached and practised is the very essence of morality, not a system of moral precepts. Considered merely as the teacher and revealer of an ethical disposition, He occupies a position different from all other leading moralists and is far above them. The number of distinctive moral ideals which have been held up to men has been small. Buddha did not reach the idea of love, but only of sympathy. The Stoics taught control of the passions, even of affection: the attitude they advocated towards the enemy was not love or friendship as we understand it, but indifference. Theoretically, that was also their attitude to the suffering and joy of wife and child. The ideals of Plato and Aristotle were essentially aristocratic. The ideal of Individualists - whether aesthetic, as found amongst the ancients, or materialistic as the "blonde bestie" of Nietzsche - is no better, is perhaps worse than the mechanical and impersonal view of society which is sometimes advocated as Socialism.

In His ideal of love Jesus reveals at once the deepest ground and the final goal of the moral life. And it is of the very essence of love to be transmitted by personal contagion. Not argument or theoretical discussion produces love, but simply love; and love started where creation started - in God. Jesus loved - it was thus that He drew men to Himself; it was thus that He started His Church; and it is in relation to this supreme fact that the significance of His death is to be found.

VII.

Though love is not the outcome of teaching, doctrine nevertheless plays an important part in the religious life lived in a specific world. The teaching of Christianity has from this point of view a two-fold purpose: to give an account of the world and of God in relation to the aim of love; and to reveal some of the characteristics of love itself. The world is represented as admitting of the realisation of love, in its being dependent upon God, whose nature is best symbolised as that of a loving Father. Love is the "final cause", the *raison d'être* of the Universe. The character of love is practical, showing itself in service. Jesus makes so great an impression because He everywhere gives evidence of sincerely endeavouring to live His ideal. Could one imagine the ethical and religious teachers of Greece associating especially with sinners, with harlots and extortioners? And had they done so, does it seem at all probable, from what is known of the forces which lead to moral regeneration and growth, that they would have greatly affected such people? Not only is it highly improbable; there is also no reason to believe they acted so.

Christianity is the only instance in which the end and the means are equally high *intrinsic* goods – for here they are both the highest good. The method and the aim of Jesus are exactly the same, – His method is love, and His aim is love. His attitude towards the Magdalene engendered devotion in her, as everywhere love leads to more love. Personal devotion expressing itself in active service raises men above the evils of life. Such service does not cease when the demand for sacrifice is made: through sacrifice its deepest and sublimest nature is realised. The principle of love is the principle of dying to self in order to live in the fuller life of the whole. The good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep. In this spirit Jesus met His own death: and as the supreme sacrifice made by one who had revealed and lived the highest ideal

it makes its unique appeal to humanity. No other who sacrificed his life for a good cause has ever exerted such a power of attraction: no other has ever manifested such an intimate connection between conviction and personal conduct: no other life, teaching, and death have been so inseparable in their nature and implication as His. Others have indicated aspects of moral truth: He has revealed its essence.

To adopt this ideal, by contact with love to come oneself to love, brings at the same time a more intense consciousness of the lack of love – that is, of moral evil in the world – and also of suffering which calls for redemption through love. In life as at present experienced, love until its complete realisation involves suffering. Because Jesus loved so well He suffered so much: He who would follow Jesus must take up the cross. Through suffering love is realised, and through love men are redeemed from suffering. The life and death of Jesus disprove once for all the notion that suffering and failure are always the *consequence* of the sins of those who suffer or fail. Sin does cause suffering: but often to the innocent. It is because we are members one of another that it is so supremely important that the true nature of Atonement should be understood – its dependence upon actual personal influence and the principle of dying to live. Some suffering is not accounted for by human sin: but love raises men above all suffering. The death of Jesus leads us, and His influence coming down through the ages moves us, to see in pain – even in sin – the instigation to love, and the sphere of its sincerest realisation, the love for sinners and sufferers. ‘For if ye love them which love you, what thank have ye? for sinners also love those that love them.’ (Luke vi. 32.)

It is on account of the nature and intimate connection of His life, ideal, and death that so large a portion of humanity sees in Jesus its highest revelation of God. Love the actuality of His life – is also the purpose of the Uni-

verse; the progressive creation of a "Kingdom of God" in the personal relationship of sons to a divine Father. The acceptance of suffering, the self-denial, the self-sacrifice, the self-limitation, involved in the achievement of the final harmony, He manifests in His teaching and crucifixion, and so reveals the suffering, the self-limitation of God Himself in the creation of a world of free spirits to share in the divine good of love.

Much of what has been urged above relates more especially to the realm of the moral, but at every stage there have been religious implications, if religion consists in the experience of love. Religion, however, has especial reference to the realisation of love in the whole, that is, not only in the world but also between the world and God.

The basis of the ethical attitude and teaching of Jesus was His filial trust and faith in God. His felt personal relation to God. The strength of this reaches its highest manifestation in the submission and acceptance which is the most prominent characteristic of the trial and crucifixion. However great the suffering of Jesus He was raised above it by His relation to God. His death has a definitely religious significance, in that it is "accepted" by Him with a trust in God which is the only real basis of optimism.

The attitude of Jesus towards the notion of justice, which at a later time under Judaistic and Roman influences found its way into views of the Atonement, should be remembered. In the parable of the men who worked for different lengths of time in the vineyard and all received a like reward, Jesus contrasts the action of the lord of the vineyard with the "just" demands of the men as "good" with "evil": "Is thine eye evil because I am good?" (Matt xx. 15). So again on the return of the prodigal, although he had already received the portion of goods which "fell unto" him, his father orders the fatted calf to be killed and makes a feast. The other son regards this as "unjust", and some modern writers would

prefer "justice" to the love shown by the father.* The idea of justice, while definitely opposed by Jesus, is nowhere taught by Him as a principle of the universe. And this should be an additional reason for rejecting those theories of Atonement which represent the satisfaction of justice as the matter at issue.

VIII.

In conclusion the contentions here made may be summarised. Theology urgently needs a more definite consideration of the meaning and the use of its terms. Yet, for the requirements of the religious life of our time this must not begin with a discussion of the theological systems of the past but with actual experiences more or less common to men. *Atonement* was thus found to be a convenient term to include (1) *Reconciliation*, the healing of discord between persons, (2) *Regeneration*, the change of attitude leading the individual to a higher level of life and so into closer harmony with men and God; and (3) *Redemption*, from suffering. These were all comprehended in the conception of Atonement for two reasons: they are most effectively accomplished through personal influence, and they lead ultimately to that close personal harmony which is to be thought of as the purpose of the universe as described by the term "the kingdom of God." Reconciliation calls for moral and intellectual endeavour as well as for repentance and forgiveness. Regeneration is a movement towards a realisation of the moral and spiritual ideal embodied in God. Redemption is a transcendence of suffering through the experience of the service

* e. g. von Hartman. "*Das Christentum des neuen Testaments*" and Ein Zeitgenosse "*Finsternisse. Die Lehre Jesu im Lichte der Kritik.*" Zurich 1896.

of love which takes one up into the wider life of the whole. Reference was at first made predominantly to the individual, but later attention was concentrated definitely upon social wholes and the purpose of the Universe. Though it touches the mystical, as seems inevitable in any serious attempt to consider the influence of mind on mind, the proposed account of Atonement in no way opposes the demands of moral, intellectual and aesthetic endeavour but rather depends upon them. The view is progressive in that every thought, feeling, and activity in human life which tends to the attainment of a good is a factor bearing directly or indirectly on the lives of persons.

Such an interpretation of Atonement is in accord both with the teaching of Jesus and with a justifiable conception of His life and person. It also recognises the importance of His death and of the birth and growth of the Christian Church. The character and power of Jesus, which may be reasonably accepted on the evidence of the Synoptic Gospels, give to Him a unique place in human salvation. Earlier views usually placed more emphasis on His death; more recently attention has been concentrated on the personal power and life. Salvation is not to be found in a "crucified God" but in the "abundant life" of deep and noble souls striving to realise the sonship revealed mostly by Him. Nevertheless, that He, who of all men actualised in His conduct the principle of love which He preached, suffered an ignominious death at the hands of His fellow creatures, is the world's greatest tragedy, an example never to be surpassed of how spiritual blindness - sin and ignorance - may kill the best that life holds. His sacrifice, made not simply for an idea but for the inculcation of the spirit and practice of love and of faith in God as the redemption from suffering, is seen in the light of later history to be the way of

triumph. The Crucifixion seemed at first to mark the death of the movement Jesus inaugurated : but the rapid rise and expansion of Christianity and its persistence ever since is the clearest proof which history gives of the truth of the principle of " dying to live ". No other resurrection is more miraculous, and no other resurrection reveals more sublime a truth than this great extension of the Christian Church. And if men will concern themselves with fundamentals instead of the trivialities of ecclesiastical prejudice or of organisation based on expediency, by its very nature the Church will grow indefinitely in power and extent. The influence of one person may lead a man to newness of life : the influence of a society of persons united in purpose should be and is much greater : therein lies the real importance of a true Church, which has its vital significance in that it continues the work Jesus began for the Atonement of humanity. Once present to the world an intelligible conception of the place Jesus occupies in the life of humanity and there will be few who will not follow in His steps, even though they must carry a cross. Then - but not till then - will be realised the words put by a loving disciple into the mouth of the Master : " And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me "

